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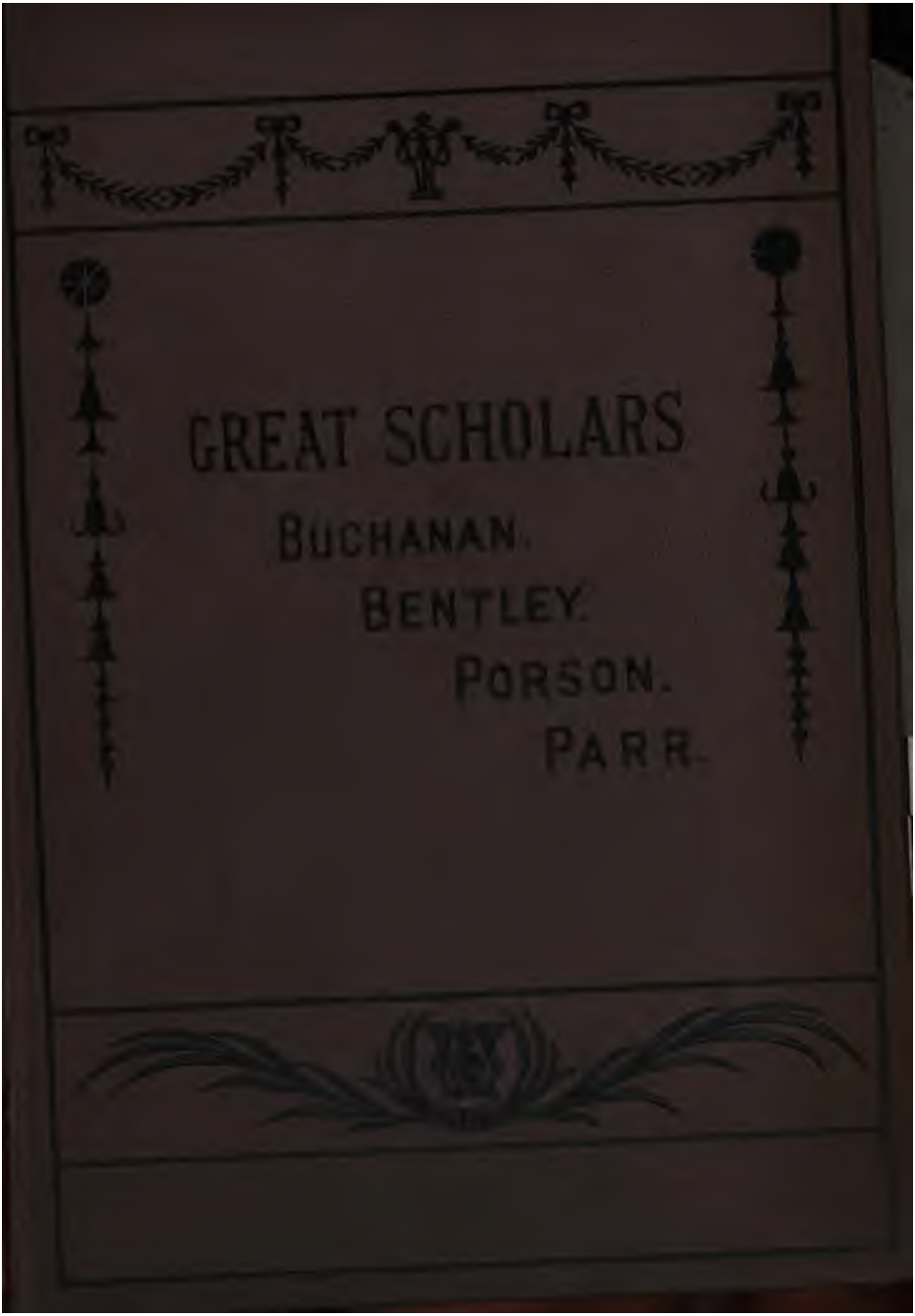
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PREFACE.

NEITHER this book nor the series of which it forms a part pretends to any higher claim than to be a concise epitome of the lives which it recounts, designed for those whom youth, business, disinclination, or lack of opportunity prevents perusing long biographies, but who nevertheless desire, as shortly as may be, to know what those great men were, what they did, and how they did it. The design being purely personal, criticism is introduced only to give a more complete presentation of the subjects and the lessons they teach, and to illustrate, embellish, or vary the narrative. We are sanguine that such an effort will be found to be of use by those among whom it is believed to be most desiderated.

For further information regarding the principal subjects treated of in this book, the reader is referred to Irving's "Life of Buchanan;" Monk's "Life of Bentley;" Watson's "Life of Porson;" and Johnstone's "Life of Parr."



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
GEORGE BUCHANAN, ...	1
RICHARD BENTLEY, ...	35
RICHARD PORSON, ...	91
SAMUEL PARR, ...	139
MISCELLANEOUS, ...	189

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
GEORGE BUCHANAN, ...	1
RICHARD BENTLEY, ...	35
RICHARD PORSON, ...	91
SAMUEL PARR, ...	139
MISCELLANEOUS, ...	189



GEORGE BUCHANAN.



GEORGE BUCHANAN.

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Of those who in modern times have acquired a profound knowledge of the Latin tongue, and have written in it with purity and correctness, George Buchanan stands among the first. His name is indeed one of which all Scotchmen may well be proud, for it alone is sufficient to redeem, in great measure, the fame of Scottish classical learning from the slurs which have been so often cast upon it. Dr Johnson, who was never tired of sneering at the scholarship of Scotland, and whose political principles were by no means such as to prejudice him in Buchanan's behalf, is nevertheless constrained to own his superiority. In his "Journey to the Western Islands," he says:—"At an hour somewhat late we came to St Andrews, a city once archiepiscopal; where that university still subsists in which philosophy was taught by Buchanan, whose name has as fair a claim to immortality as can be conferred by modern Latin, and perhaps a fairer than the instability of modern languages admits." Buchanan's knowledge of Latin was by no means confined to grammatical minutiæ and verbal subtleties: he was as familiarly acquainted with all its resources as he was with those of his mother tongue—perhaps even more so. He has written Latin prose with an elegance and vigour which Livy might have envied, and some of his Latin verses possess such sweetness and grace that Virgil himself would not have disdained to own them.

George Buchanan was born in the parish of Killearn,

Stirlingshire, in February 1506. He came, to use his own words, "of a family more distinguished by antiquity than opulence." He was the third of a family of eight children, who, by the premature death of their father and the insolvency of their grandfather, were left solely dependent upon their mother's industry. George received the rudiments of education at the parish school of his native village. Even then he began to show signs of superior genius, which attracting the attention of his maternal uncle, James Heriot, induced him to undertake the future care of his education. By him accordingly, in 1520, George was sent to Paris to prosecute his studies at the university there.

It was then very generally the custom, for such Scotchmen as could afford it, to send their sons to be educated at that famous university, which at that period attracted students from all parts of Europe. The ancient friendship between France and Scotland, firmly cemented by strong mutual hatred of England, partly conduced to this; and, doubtless, the polished manners and superior accomplishments of the French were not without their attractions to the rugged Scotchmen of the time. It would be curious to know what were the feelings of the poor Scotch lad when he found himself in that great and brilliant city, so far different from anything he had hitherto been accustomed to. The sudden transition from the parish school of a petty Scotch village, to the greatest university then in existence, must have been a very startling one. Of his feelings, however, we have no record, and the account of how he passed his time is sufficiently meagre. That he studied with the utmost assiduity is apparent from what he accomplished afterwards, and from his own words, for he incidentally mentions that his knowledge of Latin was the result of much

juvenile labour. Even at this early age he began to give evidence of these poetical talents which he possessed in such a marked degree, being impelled thereto, he tells us, partly by natural impulse and partly by the necessity of performing the usual exercises incumbent on the younger students. His residence in Paris was brought to a sudden close by the death of his kind uncle in 1522, when he found himself, to use the simple and pathetic language of the autobiography, attacked by a severe disease and surrounded by want on every side. At the age of sixteen he was accordingly compelled to return to his native country.

Buchanan's future prospects must have at this time appeared very clouded. After devoting the best part of a year to the care of his health, he entered the service of the Duke of Albany, the Regent of Scotland, as a common soldier. He tells us that he went into the army to learn the art of war; but probably needy circumstances had more to do with his taking such a step than the desire of attaining military knowledge. Anyhow his military ardour was not of long duration. In October 1523 he proceeded with the troops to the siege of Werk, and being during the campaign subjected to severe hardships from heavy showers of snow, his frame was reduced to its former state of weakness, and he bade military life a farewell for ever. Buchanan must have found his experience as a soldier stand him in good stead when he came to write his history, where military exploits are often described with great animation and clearness. Gibbon, in his autobiography, has informed us that he found his experience while serving with the Hampshire militia of the utmost value and importance to him while treating of military affairs in his great narrative.

Having recovered his health, Buchanan again devoted himself to the more congenial pursuit of learning. At the age of eighteen he entered the University of St Andrews, which has the honour of counting him among its graduates. He took his degree there in 1525. It is worth mentioning that among his fellow students was John Knox, who then entered into a close friendship with him which was terminated only by death. Knox, writing towards the close of his life, speaks of him thus: —"That notabil man, Mr George Bucquhanane remanis alyve to this day, in the yeir of God 1566 yeares, to the glory of God, to the gret honour of this natioun, and to the comfort of thame that delyte in letters and vertue. That singular work of Davidis Psalmes, in Latin meetere and poesie, besyd many others can witness to the rare grace of God given to that man." While at St Andrews Buchanan attended the lectures of John Mair or Major on the "art of logic, or rather sophistry," as he expresses it. In company with Major he returned to France and entered the Scottish College of Paris. There he graduated as B.A. in 1527, and as M.A. in 1528.

After a hard struggle for two years with the "iniquity of fortune," as he terms it, Buchanan was appointed a regent or professor in the College of St Barbe, where he taught grammar for three years. This chair seems to have yielded him a very scanty pittance. Fortunately, however, he became acquainted with the young Earl of Cassilis, who was residing in the locality. Admiring Buchanan's conversational powers and various accomplishments he engaged him as his tutor. The connection appears to have been a happy one on both sides. To Lord Cassilis as "a youth of promising talents and excellent disposition," Buchanan inscribed his first published work—a translation of Linacre's Latin Grammar, which appeared in 1533.

In 1537, Buchanan and his pupil returned to Scotland. While in Paris, Buchanan seems to have seriously turned his attention to the doctrines of the Reformation, and to have embraced the tenets of Luther, though he then considered it advisable to keep his opinions concealed. While residing at the Earl of Cassilis's seat in Ayrshire, he appears to have meditated deeply over the abuses of the Church of Rome. His meditations resulted in a Latin poem, bearing the title of "Somnium;" or, "The Dream," in which the impudence and hypocrisy of the Franciscan monks are attacked with much pungent raillery. In attacking the monks, Buchanan soon found he had attacked a dangerous enemy, and he was thinking of returning to France when James V. took him under his protection, and appointed him tutor to his natural son, James Stewart, who afterwards held the abbacies of Kelso and Melrose. The king, who was at this time on bad terms with the clergy, commanded Buchanan to write a second satire against them. Taught by experience to dread the hostility of the hierarchy, Buchanan wrote a light and playful piece, couched in such cautious language as he hoped might occasion little animosity. This by no means satisfied the king, whose own vein of satire was coarse and rough, while, of course, it was displeasing to the ecclesiastics. James then commanded Buchanan to expose their vices in a more damaging light, and this time the royal mandate was obeyed to the fullest extent in a satire entitled, "Franciscanus."

"Franciscanus" is an excellent specimen of what may be called classical Billingsgate. Like all Buchanan's other works, it is distinguished by the elegance and purity of its Latinity. The argument is briefly as follows:—He supposes that a friend of his is desirous of becoming a cordelier; upon which he tells him that he

also at one time had similar intentions, but that a third person, whose reasons he proceeds to relate, had dissuaded him from it. These reasons consist of the abominable morals of those who belong to the order, as exhibited in the detestable precepts which he puts into the mouth of an ancient monk, the instructor of novices. Buchanan soon experienced the dangers of freedom of speech. The rage of the ecclesiastics was redoubled, and soon the flames of persecution burst forth. In the beginning of 1539, five individuals suspected of favouring the doctrines of the Reformation were committed to the flames. Buchanan having been comprehended in the general arrest, was not long in learning that poison is mingled in the golden cups of those who associate with princes, for James soon quailed before the storm which he himself had been the means of exciting, and to him he could no longer look for help. Moreover, he heard that Cardinal Beaton had tendered the king a sum of money as the price of his head; so, being aware of James's excessive propensity to avarice, he was compelled to seek safety in flight. After encountering many dangers from pestilence and robbers, he reached England in safety, and was kindly received by Sir John Rainsford, to whom he has inscribed a poem in token of his gratitude.

The popular commonplaces about the quietness and monotony of a scholar's life by no means apply to Buchanan. He lived in stirring times, and his life, for the most part, was a singularly animated one—a life full of difficulties manfully encountered, and success bravely won. Of the state of England at that time, his own words give an accurate and succinct account. "Here," he says, "in the same day and in the same fire, both parties, protestant and papist, were burned together;

Henry VIII., now in his old age, being more intent upon his safety than the purity of religion." Soon finding that in England there could be no abiding place for him, he turned his thoughts once more towards France, where, he knew, he had many old acquaintances who would befriend him. To Paris accordingly he went, but misfortune still followed his footsteps, for he found his bitterest enemy, Cardinal Beaton, residing there as ambassador. In these circumstances he gladly accepted the invitation of Andrew Govea, a Portuguese, principal of the College of Guienne in Bordeaux, to become one of the professors there.

At Bordeaux, he resided for three years, and, in spite of the menaces of Cardinal Beaton, who wrote to the Archbishop of Bordeaux to secure the person of the daring heretic, they appear to have been years of happiness and comfort. The task assigned to him was the teaching of the Latin language—a position for which he was eminently qualified. Among his pupils was the celebrated Montaigne, who was an actor in all his plays which were represented there, and who mentions him several times in his essays. A pleasing feature of Buchanan's life throughout, is the close intimacy and friendship he cultivated with all the leading scholars of the day with whom he was brought into contact. In an age remarkable for the number and virulence of its literary squabbles, he seems to have been almost wholly exempt from them. Even the elder Scaliger, whose vanity was something unique and colossal, and whose quarrels with his learned contemporaries were of extreme frequency and acerbity, was a warm friend of Buchanan, and speaks of him in terms of the highest admiration. With all his learned colleagues at Bordeaux, Buchanan seems to have worked most harmoniously. While there, he devoted much attention to

literary studies, writing his two tragedies, "Jephthes," and "Johannes Baptistes," besides translations of the "Medea" and "Alcestis" of Euripides. The latter amply prove that his acquaintance with Greek was far from inconsiderable.

Upon leaving Bordeaux he returned to Paris, where we find him officiating, in 1544, as a regent in the College of Cardinal de Moine. Here he had for his colleagues such celebrated men as Turnebus and Muretus, names high among the leaders of the scholarship of the day. In this situation he seems to have remained till 1547, when, with his old friend Govea, he went, at the instance of the King of Portugal, to Coimbra, to be a professor at the university lately established there. Fearing persecution for his religious views, he took care to inform the king that "Franciscanus" had been written at his sovereign's command. For a time all went on prosperously. In 1548, however, Govea died, and, deprived of his protection, the unfortunate foreign professors were left exposed to the jealousy of the natives and the bigoted intolerance of the priests. As was natural, Buchanan especially was the object of their hatred. The following account of his persecution is given in his autobiography:—"Towards Buchanan in particular their conduct was most bitterly tormenting, for he was a stranger who had few to rejoice in his safety, sympathize in his misfortunes, or who would move a step to avenge his injuries. One crime with which he was charged was a poem which he had written against the Franciscans, which he himself, before he had left France, had taken care to get explained to the King of Portugal, and which his accusers knew nothing at all about; for the only copy he had ever parted with was to the King of the Scots, at whose command it had been written. He was also accused

of having eaten flesh during Lent, when nobody in all Spain abstains from it. Certain reflections against the monks were also urged against him, which could have appeared criminal to no one but to monks themselves. It was likewise deemed a heinous offence because, in a conversation with some young Portuguese, when the Eucharist was mentioned, he said it appeared to him that Augustine seemed rather to favour the party condemned by the Church of Rome. Two other witnesses, John Talpin, a Norman, and John Ferrerius, a Piedmontese —as he learned some years after—gave evidence that they had heard several creditable persons affirm that Buchanan entertained sentiments opposed to the Romish religion."

After the Inquisition had harassed him for about a year and a half, they sentenced him to be confined in a monastery for some months, in order to be instructed in the true doctrines of religion. While there he seems to have been kindly enough treated by the monks, who, he remarks, were ignorant of religion, but by no means destitute of humanity. His confinement had one good result, at all events. He passed the weary hours of his captivity in writing his translation of the Psalms, one of the chief pillars upon which his literary fame rests. Of this work we shall have more to say hereafter. It is curious to note how many celebrated works have had their origin while their authors were in captivity. In prison Cervantes began his immortal romance, Don Quixote, which may be reckoned among the greatest triumphs of human genius; in prison Sir Walter Raleigh found relief from his burden of care in writing his History of the World; and in prison John Bunyan wrote that immortal dream, which, at first despised as the puerile production of an illiterate tinker, has long

since taken its place high among the glories of English literature. Truly

> " Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage."

When at length he was restored to liberty, heartily sick of Portugal, Buchanan embarked in a Greek vessel and sailed to England. There he stayed only a short time, although several positions of importance were offered him. In 1553 he returned to France, to which country he seems to have always been warmly attached. On his arrival he wrote a poem, " Adventus in Galliam," in which are represented the hatred and contempt he entertained for the Portuguese, and his love and admiration of the French. Having held the office of regent in the College of Boncourt for two years, in 1555 he was appointed tutor to Timoleon de Cosse, son of the celebrated Count de Brissac. By the Count he was treated with the deference and respect to which his talents entitled him. He was even called upon to give his advice in the military council. His introduction there is said to have been effected in the following manner. Happening to enter an apartment near the hall in which the marshal and his officers were engaged in discussing some measure of great importance, and overhearing their debates, he could not refrain from murmuring his disapprobation of the opinion supported by the majority. One of the generals smiled at so unexpected a salutation, but the marshal, having invited Buchanan into the council, enjoined him to deliver his reasons without restraint; whereupon he proceeded to explain his reasons of dissent with such clearness as to excite the wonder of Brissac and his officers. In the end it turned out that his opinion was correct.

With the Count de Brissac's family, Buchanan lived for five years, residing alternately in France and Italy. His pupil did not discredit him either in talents or character. After a short but brilliant career he fell at the siege of Mucidan, aged only twenty-six years. About this time Buchanan wrote part of a philosophical poem of considerable excellence, entitled "De Sphaera," which was addressed to his pupil. But a more important matter engaged much of his leisure. He studied, with more attention than hitherto, the religious controversies of the day. The result of his studies was that he became a confirmed Protestant, though for prudential reasons he did not at that time openly renounce Catholicism. He candidly owns that his attachment to the principles of the Reformation had been increased by the intense malignity with which the priests regarded him.

About the year 1562 he returned to Scotland. Queen Mary was then reigning, loved and admired by all, in the full tide of her beauty and prosperity. Buchanan had before courted her favour by two epithalamia, one on her marriage with the Dauphin, the other on her marriage with Lord Darnley. Apparently his services had been appreciated, for in 1562 we find him at court officiating as classical tutor to the fair queen. Randolph, the English ambassador, in 1562 writes thus from Edinburgh to his employers:—"There is with the Queene one called George Bowhanan, a Scottishe man very well learned, that was schollemaster unto Monsr. de Brissack's son, very Godlye and honest;" and again:—"The Queene readeth daylie after her dinner, instruckted by Mr George Bowhanan, somewhat of Livy." It would form an interesting picture, that of the beautiful young queen and the stern old scholar, studying together Livy's classic page, she nurtured in the lap of luxury, brought up with

the utmost tenderness and care, having scarcely ever known what it was to have a wish unsatisfied or a desire unappeased; he with his youth spent amid the hardships of severe poverty, having had his way to fight in the world against difficulties and dangers which would have utterly discomfited any less courageous nature, every additional step of success having been attained slowly and with difficulty. If any seer could then have foretold to these two what a change would occur in their relations to each other within a few short years, how little credence would have been placed in his prophecy. Within that time we find Mary a fugitive in England, despised and hated by those who had formerly admired and loved her most; and we find George Buchanan, her former friend and preceptor, forming one of her principal accusers at the court of Elizabeth.

In 1556 appeared the second edition of Buchanan's translation of the Psalms. When the first edition appeared is not altogether certain, there being no date on the title-page. Both were printed at Paris, by Henry Stephens, the famous Greek scholar. On the title-page Buchanan is styled "Poetarum nostri sacculi facile princeps." It is mainly upon this work that Buchanan's fame as a poet rests. No modern writer of Latin has written verses distinguished by so much real poetic genius and grace of expression.

This work amply suffices to show that Buchanan had studied the Latin poets, not as a pedagogue, but as a man of poetic feeling and power. It was rather his misfortune than his choice, that neglecting his own vernacular he composed his verses in Latin,—the rough and homely language of Scotland cannot but have been distasteful to one whose reading had been devoted to the great authors of antiquity, and who must have used Latin

as a medium of conversation to a very considerable extent. At one time Buchanan's Psalms was a very generally read work, in Scotland at any rate, and was used by many as a school book. We have seen a literal translation of it into English, published in 1816, evidently intended as a "crib" for the use of schoolboys of a bygone generation. At the time of its publication it was received with a universal chorus of admiration. Part of what Henry Stephens says on the subject is worth quoting as shewing the inflated and ridiculous style in which the scholars of that age were wont to address each other in their formal and pedantic epistles. "You have been too long concealed, my Buchanan: you must now, as you perceive, come into public notice: whether you will or not, I will drag you from your concealment. Are you angry with me on this account; and yet I am either deceived, or it shall be effected by my services, that hereafter George Buchanan, a Scotchman, above all the French and Italian poets of our age

"Laudetur, vigeat, placeat, relegatur, ametur."

For I willingly adopt a verse of Augustus in celebrating so august a poet: and unless I were afraid to commend you to your face, I should advance something much more august. Yet what occasion have you for me to publish your praise, since almost every verse that you have composed proclaims your superior genius? At present, therefore, I shall only mention one circumstance: as there is nothing more honourable, nothing more splendid, than after excelling all others, at length to excel one's self; so, in my judgment, you have most happily attained to this praise in your version of the Psalms. For in translating the other odes of this sacred poet, you have been Buchanan, that is you have been as

conspicuous among the other paraphrasts, as the moon among the smaller luminaries; but when you come to the one hundred and fourth Psalm, you surpass Buchanan; so that you do not now shine like the moon among the smaller luminaries, but, like the sun, you seem to obscure all the stars by your brilliant rays." Stephens was by no means alone in his extravagant praise. Pope Urban VIII. is said to have averred that it was a pity it was written by so great a heretic, otherwise it would have been sung in the churches under his authority; the famous Bishop Bedell loved it "beyond all other Latin poetry," and Nicholas Bourbon declares that he would rather have been the author of it than Archbishop of Paris.

About this time, Buchanan also published *Fratres Fraterrimi*, a volume of satires directed against the abuses of the Church of Rome, and, in 1567, a volume of miscellaneous poems, consisting of *Elegiae*, *Silvae*, *Hendecasyllabi*.

Prefixed to the "Psalms" was a panegyric on Queen Mary. The compliment must have been pleasing to her, for in 1564, she conferred on Buchanan the temporalities of Crossragwell Abbey, amounting to the yearly value of £500 Scots. Sensible, however, that Mary's popularity was on the wane, he sedulously cultivated the friendship of the leaders of the Reformation party, having, on his return to Scotland, joined the Protestant Church. To the Earl of Murray, the principal man among the reformers, he dedicated, in very flattering terms, a new edition of his "Franciscanus." A vacancy occurring in the Principalship of St Leonard's College, St Andrews, Buchanan, through the influence of Murray, was appointed to the vacant post. An inventory of the contents of the chamber he there occupied has been preserved, and is

curious as showing with what humble furnishings people were then satisfied. It runs as follows:—"Twa standard beds, the foreside of aik, and the northside and fuits of fir. Item ane feather bed, and ane white plaid of four ells and ane covering woven o'er with images. Item another auld bed of harden filled with straw, with ane covering of green. Item ane inrower of buckram of five breeds, part green, part red to zaillow. Item ane Flanders counter of the middlin kind. Item ane little buird for the studzie. Item ane furm of fir and ane little letterin of aik on the side of the bed with ane image of St Jerom. Item ane stool of elm with ane other chair of little price. Item ane chimney weighing ——. Item ane chandler weighing ——." As Principal of the College, Buchanan appears for the first time in the character of a preacher, part of his duties being to give occasional prelections on theology. His reputation at the University appears to have stood high; in the Public Register he is styled, "Pœtarum nostræ memoriæ facile princeps." A clearer proof of the esteem in which he was generally held is to be found in the fact that he was chosen Moderator of the General Assembly in 1567. He had sat as a member of that body from 1563, and taken a leading part in its debates, having been a constant member of the more important committees.

Hitherto we have had principally to do with Buchanan as a man of letters; we have now to consider him as an active participator in the tangled and troublous politics of his time. To give a full account of all the transactions in which he was engaged would be to write the history of Scotland for the period, which we have no intention of doing—it is enough that we relate the part Buchanan took in them.

The popularity of Mary, which had at first been great

was not destined to be of long duration. The murders of Rizzio and Darnley, and her marriage with Bothwell, completely alienated those who had formerly been her warmest supporters, and among them Buchanan, who henceforth attacked the ill-fated queen with a severity and acrimony which shewed that their former intimacy had been powerless to mitigate in the smallest degree his present animosity. The part Buchanan took in Mary's affairs had exposed him to much abuse from her partizans, and even others of less prejudiced opinions have said that since Buchanan could not conscientiously defend her, he might at least have preserved a kindly neutrality towards his former patroness. But the fact of the matter is that this was a time when it was impossible for any Scotchman to be neutral. The blood of the country was at fever heat, party spirit everywhere ran high, families were divided among themselves as to the great question of the queen's innocence or guilt; and for a man in Buchanan's position, having nearly all his friends belonging to the party opposed to the queen, to espouse the cause of neither side was a moral impossibility. When we consider that Mary's character, down almost to the present day, has been debated among historians with a sharpness and vigour, often very little in accordance with the so-called "dignity of history," we can imagine with what intensity of feeling her cause must have been regarded in Buchanan's time. We shall touch but briefly upon this part of Buchanan's life. Having been appointed one of the Commissioners at the court of Elizabeth to inquire into Mary's conduct, he wrote in Latin a Detection of Mary's actions, which was industriously circulated in the English court, and afterwards translated into English. It contains one of the most damaging exposures of Mary's character and con-

duct ever issued. In connection with this matter, a very serious charge has been brought against Buchanan of having forged the letters and sonnets supposed to have passed between Mary and Bothwell, from which it was made to appear that she participated in the murder of her husband. Of this there is no proof at all sufficient, and it may safely be set down as one of the many calumnies against Buchanan, which have had their origin in the malice of his enemies.

When Buchanan returned to Scotland there came along with him his patron, the Earl of Murray, who soon afterwards fell by the hand of an assassin. For him Buchanan appears to have entertained a deeper affection than for any of the rest of his friends, and his disastrous death must have grieved him deeply. Being suspicious of the policy of the Hamiltons, by one of whom the outrage had been committed, he addressed "Ane admonition direct to the true lordis maintainers of the Kingis graces authorite," in which he earnestly adjured them to protect the young king and the children of the late king from the perils which seemed to hang over them. In the same year, 1570, he wrote another Scotch tract, entitled "Chameleon," a satirical delineation of the wavering politics of the Secretary Maitland. Regarding Buchanan's composition in the vernacular, Dugald Stewart says:— "When we read the compositions of Buchanan in his native tongue, how completely are his genius and taste obscured by these homely manners which the coarseness of his dialect recalls; and how difficult it is to believe that they express the ideas and sentiments of the same writer, whose Latin productions may vie with the best models of antiquity."

In 1570 the Lords of the privy council appointed Buchanan to the important office of tutor to the young

King James, in whom the hopes of the nation were now centred. Along with him were associated a Mr Peter Young and the abbots of Cambuskenneth and Dryburgh. Young was a man of mild disposition, and seems to have been considerably impressed with "the divinity which doth hedge a king." Not so Buchanan. His notions of discipline were of the strictest Spartan kind, and he fully acted up to them, "being," as Irving says, "little solicitous what impression the strictness of his discipline might leave on the mind of his royal pupil." "Mr Peter Young," says Sir James Melvil, "was more gentle, and was loathe to offend the king at any time, carrying himself warily, as a man who had a mind to his own weal by keeping of his majesty's favour; but Mr George was a stoic philosopher, who looked not far before him. A man of notable endowments for his learning and knowledge of Latin poesie, much honoured in other countries, pleasant in conversation, rehearsing at all occasions moralities short and instructive, whereof he had abundance, inventing where he wanted." Regarding Buchanan's conduct to his royal pupil, Irving has related some anecdotes, which agreeably diversify the dreary pages of his erudite volume—surely one of the dullest books ever written on an interesting subject. The king, having coveted a tame sparrow which belonged to his playfellow, the Master of Mar, solicited him without effect to transfer his right; and, in attempting to wrest it out of his hand, deprived the animal of life. The boy loudly lamented its fate, and the circumstances were reported to Buchanan, who gave the young monarch a box on the ear, and told him that what he had done was like a true bird of the bloody nest to which he belonged. Another anecdote is thus related:—"One of the earliest propensities which James discovered, was an excessive

attachment to favourites; and this weakness, which ought to have been abandoned with the other characteristics of childhood, continued to retain its ascendancy during every stage of his life. His facility in complying with every request alarmed the prophetic sagacity of Buchanan. On the authority of the poet's nephew, Chytraeus has recorded a ludicrous expedient which he adopted for the purpose of correcting his pupil's conduct. He presented the young king with two papers which he requested him to sign; and James, after having slightly interrogated him regarding their contents, readily appended his signature to each, without the precaution of even a cursory perusal. One of them was a formal transference of the regal authority for the term of fifteen days. Having quitted the royal presence, one of the courtiers accosted him with his usual salutation; but to this astonished nobleman he announced himself in the new character of a sovereign; and, with that happy urbanity of humour, for which he was so distinguished, he began to assume the high demeanour of royalty. He afterwards preserved the same deportment towards the king himself; and when James expressed his amazement at such extraordinary conduct, Buchanan admonished him of his having resigned the crown. This reply did not tend to lessen the monarch's surprise; for he now began to suspect his preceptor of mental derangement. Buchanan then produced the instrument with which he was formally invested; and, with the authority of a tutor, proceeded to remind him of the absurdity of assenting to petitions in such a manner." James never forgot the threatening appearance of his stern old preceptor: he was accustomed to say of one of his courtiers, "that he even trembled at his approach, it minded him so of his pedagogue." The notions of these times as regards the

efficacy of severity in education were very different from those entertained now; and it scarcely admits of a doubt that if Buchanan had paid more attention to the feelings of his pupil it would have been better for both parties. James seems to have looked back to his early experience with something of the same shuddering horror with which his successor Charles II. used to recal the long lectures he had to listen to from the Scotch Presbyterians.

The scheme of James's education appears to have been wisely framed, including the learned languages, arithmetic, geography, astronomy, rhetoric, logic, and history. The day was passed as follows :—After morning prayers, attention was devoted to the Greek authors, and the royal pupil read a portion of the New Testament, Socrates or Plutarch, and was exercised in the grammar rules. After breakfast he read Cicero, Livy, Justin, or modern history. In the evening he applied himself to composition, and, when he had time, to arithmetic or geography, or to rhetoric and logic.

The after-history of James adds another to the many convincing proofs that the force of nature is stronger than the rod of the preceptor. James grew up to be a good scholar, but in almost everything else he was directly the opposite of Buchanan. Buchanan was a strong defender of popular rights, James was one of the staunchest supporters of the divine right of kings. Buchanan rails against episcopal authority of all kinds in matters of religion, James was a vehement High Churchman. Buchanan seems to have been of a stiff and reserved nature, steadfastly pursuing the even tenor of his way, regardless of those around him, James all his life was too ready of speech, and too easily led away by favourites. For Buchanan's political opinions James had the deepest abhorrence, and in his "Basilicon Doron" advises his

son not to attend to the abominable scandals of such men as Buchanan and Knox, "who are persons of seditious spirit, and all who hold their opinions." Yet James was aware of Buchanan's merits as a scholar. At a disputation held in Edinburgh before his Majesty, one of the English doctors expressed his admiration of the king's Latinity. "All the world," replied the king, "knows that my master, George Buchanan, was a great master in that faculty. I follow his pronunciation both of the Latin and the Greek, and am sorry that my people of England do not the like, for certainly their pronunciation utterly spoils the grace of these two learned languages. But you see all the university and learned men of Scotland express the true and native pronunciation of both." When Buchanan was accused of having made James a pedant, he replied that it was "because he was fit for nothing else." Certainly, if James had been born in a private station, and received the education he did, it is impossible to doubt but that he would have cut a much more distinguished figure as one of the scholars of the sixteenth century than he did as a king. He was the very man to write long and absurd Latin epistles of the same kind as those of which a specimen has been given in the address of Henry Stephens to Buchanan.

Buchanan at this time held the office of keeper of the privy seal, which entitled him to a seat in Parliament, in the deliberations of which he took an active part. In 1570 he formed one of a commission appointed to examine and codify the existing laws. Owing to its extreme difficulty, the scheme was never carried into execution. He was also included in a commission formed to rectify the inconvenience arising from the use of different Latin grammars in schools. Along with two others he was appointed to draw up a suitable manual, which, however,

did not stand its ground long. But the most important business in which he was engaged, was as member of a commission formed to enquire into the state of the universities. St Andrews formed the first object of investigation, and for its improvement Buchanan drew up a scheme in the Scotch language, containing many sensible suggestions. One of its most remarkable features is the number of learned men it evidently presupposes to be residing in the nation.

In the midst of all these active occupations literature was by no means neglected. Buchanan carried on an active correspondence with many of the more prominent scholars of the day—with such men as Beza, Serranus, Roger Ascham, and others of great reputation of whom even the names are now almost quite unknown. In 1576, he prepared his "Baptistes" for the press, and dedicated it to the king in a style by no means courtly. "This trifle," he says, "may seem to have a more important reference to you, because it clearly discloses the punishment of tyrants, and the misery which awaits them even when their prosperity is at the highest. That you should now acquire such knowledge, I consider not only as expedient, but even necessary; in order that you may early begin to hate what you ought ever to shun. I therefore wish this work to remain as a witness to posterity, that, if impelled by evil counsellors, or suffering the licentiousness of royalty to prevail over a virtuous education, you should hereafter be guilty of any improper conduct, the fault may be imputed, not to your preceptors, but to you who have not obeyed their virtuous admonitions." We cannot but wish that Buchanan should have remembered that the passage of years makes a considerable difference in the relations between teacher and pupil, and have addressed James in a more conciliatory

manner. Irving says, "The dedication is characterised by a manly freedom of sentiment, which has never been surpassed on a similar occasion." Most people will be inclined to think that the "manly freedom of sentiment" approaches pretty nearly to insolence.

In 1579, appeared one of Buchanan's most important works, the treatise "De Jure Regni apud Scotos." This is put in the form of a conversation between himself and Maitland, the queen's secretary, and contains a vigorous dissertation on the true principles of government. It was dedicated to the king in a somewhat similar strain to the dedication of the "Baptistes," and certainly if James's successors had followed its precepts, they would have fared better than they did. The dedication is as follows :—"Several years ago, when our affairs were in a most turbulent condition, I composed a dialogue on the prerogatives of the Scottish crown, in which I endeavoured to explain, from their very cradle, if I may adopt that expression, the reciprocal rights and privileges of kings and their subjects. Although the work seemed to be of some immediate utility, by silencing certain individuals, who, with importunate clamours, rather inveighed against the existing state of things, than examined what was conformable to the standard of reason ; yet, in consequence of returning tranquillity, I willingly consecrated my arms to public concord. But having lately met with this disputation among my papers, and supposed it to contain many precepts necessary for your tender age (especially as it is so conspicuously elevated in the scale of human affairs), I have deemed its publication expedient, that it may at once testify my zeal for your service, and admonish you of your duty to the community. Many circumstances tend to convince me that my present exertion will not prove fruitless, especially your age

yet uncorrupted by perverse opinions, a disposition above your age urging you to every noble pursuit, a facility in obeying not only your preceptors, but all prudent monitors; a judgment and dexterity in disquisition which prevents you from paying much regard to authority unless it be supported by solid argument. I likewise perceive that by a sort of natural instinct, you so abhor flattery, the nurse of tyranny, and the most grievous pest of a legitimate monarchy, that you as heartily hate the courtly solecisms and barbarisms, as they are relished and affected by those who consider themselves as the arbiters of every elegance, and who, by way of seasoning their conversation, are perpetually sprinkling it with majesties, lordships, excellencies, and if possible with expressions still more putrid. Although the bounty of nature, and the instruction of your governors, may at present secure you against this error, yet I am compelled to entertain some slight degree of suspicion, lest evil communication, the alluring nurse of the vices, should lend an unhappy impulse to your still tender mind, especially as I am not ignorant with what facility the external senses yield to seduction. I have therefore sent you this treatise, not only as a monitor, but even as an importunate, and sometimes impudent dun, who in the turn of life may convey you beyond the rocks of adulation, and may not merely offer you advice, but confine you to the path on which you have entered; and if you should chance to deviate, may reprehend you and recall your steps. If you obey this monitor, you will ensure tranquillity to yourself and to your subjects, and will transmit a brilliant reputation to the most remote posterity."

The "De Jure Regni" is a wonderfully outspoken treatise, considering the time at which it was written. Such doctrines as that the crown is not necessarily

hereditary, and that its transmission by natural descent is not defensible except for its certainty; that a violation of the laws by the monarch is punishable even with death, according to the enormity of the offence; that when St Paul talks of obedience to authority, he spoke to a low condition of persons and to a minority in the various countries in which they were—such doctrines as these, however trite and commonplace they may appear now, were far from being considered so in Buchanan's day. Abroad the treatise was received with the utmost enthusiasm, as we learn by a letter to Buchanan from his friend Rogers. "Your dialogue 'De Jure Regni,'" says he, "which you transmitted to me by Zolcher, the letter-carrier of our friend Sturmius, I have received—a present which would be extremely agreeable to me, if the importunate entreaties of some persons did not prevent me from enjoying it; for the moment it was delivered into my hand Dr Wilson requested the loan of it—he yielded to the importunity of the chancellor, from whom the treasurer procured a perusal of it, and has not yet returned it; so that, to this day, it has never been in my custody." The opinions of Sir James Macintosh and Dugald Stewart on this tractate may be of interest. "The science," says Sir James, "which teaches the rights of man, the eloquence that kindles the spirit of freedom, had for ages been buried with the other monuments of the wisdom and relics of the genius of antiquity. But the revival of letters first unlocked only to a few the sacred fountain. The necessary labours of criticism and lexicography occupied the earlier scholars, and some time elapsed before the spirit of antiquity was transfused into its admirers. The first man of that period who united elegant learning to profound and masculine thought was Buchanan; and he, too, seems to have been the first

scholar who caught from the ancients the noble flame of republican enthusiasm. This praise is merited by his neglected though incomparable tract, 'De Jure Regni,' in which the principles of popular politics, and the maxims of a free government, are delivered with a precision and enforced with an energy which no former age had equalled, and no succeeding had surpassed." Dugald Stewart says: "The dialogue of our illustrious countryman, Buchanan, 'De Jure Regni,' bears a closer resemblance to the political philosophy of the eighteenth century than any composition which had previously appeared. The ethical paradoxes afterwards inculcated by Hobbes as the groundwork of his slavish theory of government, are anticipated and refuted; and a powerful argument is urged against the doctrine of utility which has attracted so much attention in modern times. The political reflections, too, introduced by the same author in his History of Scotland, bear marks of a mind worthy of a better age than fell to his lot." This book afterwards went through some curious experiences. In 1584 the Parliament condemned the "Dialogue" and "History," and under a penalty of £200 commanded every person who possessed copies to surrender them within forty days, in order that they might be purged "of the offensive and extraordinary matters" which they contained. In 1664 the Privy Council of Scotland issued a proclamation forbidding all subjects, of whatever degree, quality, or rank, from transcribing or circulating any copies of a manuscript translation of the "Dialogue." In 1683 the University of Oxford signalized itself by consigning to the flames the political works of Buchanan, Milton, and several other heretics, for containing doctrine "destructive to the sacred persons of princes, their state and government, and of all human society."

We are now approaching the close of Buchanan's long and eventful life. In his seventy-fourth year he wrote a short account of his own life, to which frequent reference has been made in these pages. It is a very simply-written, straightforward, unostentatious production. A letter written to his old friend Vinetus gives the following interesting and not unpleasing view of his closing years :—" Upon receiving accounts of you by the merchants who return from your courts, I am filled with delight, and seem to enjoy a kind of second youth, for I am there apprised that some remnants of the Portuguese peregrinations still exist. As I have now attained the seventy-fifth year of my age, I sometimes call to remembrance through what toils and inquietudes I have sailed past all those objects which men commonly regard as pleasing, and have at length struck upon that rock beyond which, as the ninetieth psalm very truly avers, nothing remains but labour and sorrow. The only consolation that now awaits me is to pause with delight on the recollection of my coeval friends, of whom you are almost the only one still surviving. Although you are not, as I presume, inferior to me in years, you are yet capable of benefiting your country by your exertion and counsel, and even of prolonging, by your learned compositions, your life to a future age. But I have long bidden adieu to letters. It is now the only object of my solicitude that I may remove with as little noise as possible from the society of my ill-assorted companions, that I who am already dead may relinquish the society of the living. In the meantime I transmit to you the youngest of my literary offspring, in order that, when you discover it to be the drivelling child of my age, you may be less anxious about its brothers." This letter expresses a state of feeling not uncommon with those who have attained to

Buchanan's years. He writes as a man who feels that for him the affairs of the world have no longer much interest; instead of looking forward to the future, he loves rather to contemplate the past, and meditate on the transactions of bygone years. The letter was written in a tremulous hand, but, as Thuanus says, in a generous style.

Buchanan's last, and in some respects greatest work, was his "History of Scotland," which it is doubtful whether he ever lived to see published. While the narrative was printing in 1581 he was visited by Andrew Melvin, James Melvin, and his cousin Thomas Buchanan. Of this interview James Melvin has left an interesting account, which we give in his own words, merely modernising the spelling:—"When we came to his chamber we found him sitting in his chair teaching the young man that served him in his chamber to spell a, b, ab; e, b, eb, &c. After salutation Mr Andrew says, 'I see, sir, you are not idle.' 'Better this,' quoth he, 'than stealing sheep or sitting idle, which is as ill.' Thereafter he showed us the epistle dedicatory to the king, the which, when Mr Andrew had read, he told him that it was obscure in some places, and wanted certain words to perfect the sentence. 'I can do no more,' said he, 'for thinking on another matter.' 'What is that?' said Mr Andrew. 'To die,' quoth he; 'but I leave that and many more things for you to help.' We went from him to the printer's shop, whom we found at the end of the seventeenth book of his 'Chronicle,' at a place which we thought very hard for the time, which might be an occasion of stopping the whole work, about the burial of David Rizzio. Therefore, stopping the printer from proceeding, we came to Mr George again, and found him in bed contrary to custom, and asking him how he did,

'Even going the way of welfare,' he replied. Mr Thomas, his cousin, showed him the hardness of that part of his writing, that the king would be offended by it, and that it might cause all the work to be prohibited. 'Tell me, man,' said he, 'if I have told the truth.' 'Yes,' said Mr Thomas, 'I think so.' 'Then I will endure his anger and all his kin's,' said he. 'Pray, pray to God for me, and He will direct all.' So by the time the printing of his 'Chronicle' was ended, that most learned, wise, and godly man ended this mortal life."

The history was not finished till about a year after the occurrences related above. In criticising his history we must remember that the canons of historical criticism were very different in Buchanan's day from what they are in ours, more regard being paid to beauty of style and interest of narrative than to careful accuracy and diligent research. The earlier part of Buchanan's history is almost valueless as a chronicle of facts, though some semi-mythical stories, such as that of Macbeth, are told with great animation. In the part which deals with Queen Mary, he has followed the "Detection," previously mentioned, considerable parts of the two works being identical. Apparently Livy was the writer whom he principally imitated, and the resemblance between the two histories in point of style and form is not inconsiderable. Like Livy and the other ancient historians he frequently puts pretty long speeches in the mouth of his principal characters—speeches often remarkable for the soundness of their principles, and the eloquence with which they are written, but of course, with no pretentions to authenticity. Robertson has given what appears to us a very true character of Buchanan's history. "If his accuracy and impartiality," says he, "had been, in any degree, equal to the elegance of his taste and to the

purity and vigour of his style, his history might be placed on a level with the most admired compositions of the ancients. But instead of rejecting the improbable tales of chronicle writers he was at the utmost pains to adorn them, and has clothed with all the beauties and graces of fiction, those legends which formerly had only its wildness and extravagance." The history has been at least twice translated—once by Watkins and again by Aikman—in neither case with any great measure of success. It may now be ranked among the many famous books which are much talked of and almost never read. The researches of later writers have long ago superseded it as an accurate narrative, and the students of modern Latinity, who might be induced to read it by the elegance of its style, which is very great, are few and far between.

At Edinburgh, on the 28th of September 1582, George Buchanan breathed his last. He had a calm and peaceful close to his troubled and restless life. He was buried in Greyfriars' Churchyard, a great multitude attending his funeral. No monument marks his grave, but about the beginning of this century an obelisk was erected to his memory in his native village of Killearn.

Buchanan's face is familiar to many from the stern countenance which looks austerely on the world from the cover of *Blackwood's Magazine.* It is a face eminently characteristic of the man—firm, thoughtful, and inflexible—the face of one who had come through many trials and difficulties, who had been many a time exposed to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," and who had borne them all with true Scotch stoicism, and overcome them all with true Scotch perseverance. The Museum at Edinburgh contains a skull which is commonly supposed to be that of Buchanan. "This skull,"

says Irving, "which is so thin as to be transparent, is commonly shown in contrast to that of an idiot, which is of prodigious thickness." In regard to dress and appearance Buchanan is said to have been slovenly and inattentive. So far as concerns those little traits of looks and manners, which in a great man we look to with so much interest, our information about Buchanan is almost *nil.*

In his knowledge of Latin, it may be doubted whether Buchanan has had any equal among the moderns—he has certainly had no superior. This knowledge must have been of great advantage to him in many ways. Latin was then the diplomatic tongue of the republic of letters, and the scholar was especially a citizen of the world, not only in his fame and in his tastes, but in his abode. But great as Buchanan's scholarship was, he was no mere pedant. Although Ruddiman has shown that in his translation of the psalms he was attentive to the minutest points of Latin versification, it is by no means a mere cento of expressions from Latin authors, it is everywhere distinguished by the marks of a powerful and original mind. His political principles are those of a man who thought for himself, and who did not take his opinions from books or from the men with whom he came in contact. His "History of Scotland," obsolete though it now is, will bear favourable comparison with any other work of the age, not only in point of style, but as regards historical accuracy. That he was a man of pleasing and witty conversation is shown by the many influential friends who sought his company, and by the numerous apocryphal anecdotes which are clustered round his name. Of his abilities in public life, the numerous high offices he was thought fit to be entrusted with, afford a sufficient proof.

Buchanan's moral character has been much assailed by the venom of his enemies, but it has never been proved at all clearly that he was guilty of any flagrant faults; and if proof had been possible, we may be sure it would have been forthcoming. In his temper he was severe even to moroseness, but when we consider the many hardships he came through, we must admit that it was only natural he should be *eo immitior qui toleraverat.* That he was rather too violent a partizan cannot, we think, be denied, but the same is true of almost every prominent man of the age—for example, it is eminently true of John Knox. That he was possessed of uprightness and probity his whole life bears witness. He seems to have been a sincere friend, and no one ever attracted so much love from troops of friends without being possessed of many amiable qualities. What faults he had were not the faults of a base or servile nature, and the whole tenor of his life and writings justifies us in concluding him to have been a good, as well as a great man.

RICHARD BENTLEY.

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SHAKESPEARE is not more decidedly the greatest of English poets, than is Richard Bentley the greatest of English scholars. He has neither equal nor second. Others, indeed, may have equalled him in special departments, but of the whole wide field of classical learning no one ever acquired such a mastery as he. In his own time the best scholars of this and other countries looked on him with admiring respect; and though the labours of many minds have done much to advance scholarship since then, though many points then enveloped in darkness have since been made clear, his reputation still shines with its former lustre, the star of his fame has never waxed dim; in the world of classical learning Richard Bentley is yet a name to conjure with, and those who have made the greatest advances in that often dry and difficult field of investigation, have ever been the loudest in his praises. And Bentley was not merely a great scholar; in every sense of the word he was a great man, great in intellect, and great in character. Haughty, rash, imperious, his motto might have been like the nation whose literature he loved so well, "*Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.*" The faults in Bentley's character were not weaknesses; they were the perverted and abnormal growths of a strong and vigorous nature. Often we must acknowledge him wrong, often unjust, often tyrannical; but servile, mean, and contemptible—never.

Through all his long and troubled career he commands our respect; we cannot help having a lurking pleasure in the discomfiture of his enemies, even while acknowledging the justice of their cause; and his final triumph, after so many hard-fought battles, inspires us with feelings of the liveliest satisfaction.

Richard Bentley was born at Oulton, near Wakefield, in Yorkshire, on January 27th 1662. His father was a respectable yeoman of the higher class. He received his early education at Wakefield Grammar School. As may easily be believed, "he went through the school with singular reputation for his proficiency as well as for his regularity." Beyond this nothing appears to be known of his school career, save that he always expressed the greatest attachment to his place of education, and extended to those coming from it his encouragement and patronage. At the age of fifteen Bentley was transferred to St John's College, Cambridge. That he studied diligently at the University may be easily gathered from his subsequent achievements. Even at that early period he appears to have struck out some of his valuable discoveries in Latin metre, besides devoting considerable attention to mathematics, for which, like Porson, he had always a fondness. Of his contemporaries at the University, the only one with whom he maintained a friendship in after life was the famous William Wotton, the most extraordinary instance of juvenile precocity on record. Well authenticated although the reports of this infant prodigy are, one has considerable difficulty in crediting them. It is certified by the testimony of many unimpeachable witnesses that at six years of age he was able to read and translate Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, to which at seven he added some knowledge of the Arabic and Syriac. At ten years old he was pronounced the equal

of Hammond and Grotius. At thirteen he took his degree of B.A., being then acquainted with twelve languages! It is unnecessary to mention that Wotton never accomplished anything afterwards at all corresponding to the promise of his youth. Even his most famous work on "Ancient and Modern Learning" would now be quite forgotten were it not for the famous controversy with which it is connected.

In 1680 Bentley took his degree with distinction, his position corresponding to that of third Wrangler according to the present arrangement. He would doubtless have been appointed to a fellowship, but was excluded by a rule not rescinded till long after, which confined the number of fellows born in each county to two. As two Yorkshiremen already held fellowships, Bentley was compelled to look elsewhere for sustenance, and accordingly in 1682 accepted the appointment of head master of the Grammar School of Spalding in Lincolnshire. It must be remembered that at this time he was only about twenty years of age, and, as his biographer says, the commission of so important a trust to a youth, is not only a testimony of his scholarship, but implies a high opinion of the steadiness and discretion of his character.

This situation he soon exchanged for one more congenial to a man of his tastes. After holding it a year, fortunately for the world of letters, as well as for himself, he was appointed domestic tutor in the family of Dean Stillingfleet, afterwards Bishop of Worcester. Stillingfleet, himself a person of considerable learning and talents, doubtless duly appreciated his son's tutor, and for Bentley the situation was about as desirable a one as could be imagined. Stillingfleet possessed one of the best private libraries in the country, of which Bentley made full use, and besides this he had the opportunity of see-

ing and conversing with many of the leading men in the kingdom who visited his patron. That Stillingfleet had a pretty accurate appreciation of Bentley's character, appears from the following anecdote:—A nobleman dining at his patron's, and happening to sit next to Bentley, was so much struck with his information and powers of argument, that he remarked to the Bishop after dinner, "My Lord, that chaplain of yours is certainly a very extraordinary man." "Yes," said Stillingfleet, "had he but the gift of humility he would be the most extraordinary man in Europe." In the Bishop's household Bentley passed six years, years doubtless of happiness and peace, which he employed in laying the foundations of his unrivalled learning.

Early in 1689 Bentley removed with his pupil to Wadham College, Oxford, where he had access to the vast stores, manuscript and otherwise, of the Bodleian Library. We can imagine with what delight the young scholar, in the pride of his youth and genius, availed himself of this inestimable privilege. Here his unwearied industry and fine sagacity found full scope, and he began to revolve in his mind vast schemes of authorship from which a veteran scholar might well have shrunk back dismayed. One of these was a complete collection of the fragments of the Greek poets—an undertaking of incredible difficulty, seeing that they consist of scattered lines spread over the whole great expanse of Greek literature. Another project, involving at least equal labour, was an edition of all the Greek lexicographers—Hesychius, Suidas, Pollux, &c. Neither of these schemes was ever carried into execution, to the irreparable loss of Greek literature; for it may be safely asserted that, of all the scholars who have lived before or since, Bentley was the man best qualified to perform them. Bentley's first publication was by no

means of so ostentatious a nature as the execution of these two grand projects, yet it showed how perfectly fit he was to engage in them. It was an Epistle to Dr John Mill, appended to an edition of Malalas, a wretched Byzantine chronicler. His remarks are far from being confined to the author they are intended to illustrate; they branch out into numerous side points, all alike abundantly manifesting the learning of their writer. "On the whole," says an able critic, "it might be fairly asserted of the Epistle to Mill, that no work of classical criticism had yet appeared since the revival of letters, which in the same number of pages contained such variety of information, so many happy emendations, or which so clearly showed that a new school of criticism was about to commence, which would own Bentley as its legitimate parent."

Such was Bentley's first appearance as a scholar—we have now to consider his first appearance in the less congenial character of a divine. In 1692 he was appointed to deliver the first series of the lectures founded by Robert Boyle. Much applauded as his lectures were at the time, it is perhaps not an unfair criticism to say that they interest the reader now chiefly as showing the style of theological controversy current at that period. The subject is a "Confutation of Atheism," and the immeasurable scorn and contempt which Bentley pours upon his adversaries, the coarse personalities he indulges in, the tone of vast superiority assumed throughout, are such as to make us thankful for the more Christian, tolerant, and forbearing spirit with which such topics are now discussed. He more than once hints that it would be desirable to exert the strong arm of the law against his unfortunate opponents. "It is a vigorous execution of good laws," he says, "and not rational discourses only, either neg-

lected or not understood, that must reclaim the profaneness of these perverse and unreasonable men." The style, as in all Bentley's works, is strong, vigorous, and direct; often rude, often uncouth, often almost vulgar, but always clear and forcible. As a favourable example of Bentley's English style, as well as a specimen of the subject-matter of a book once much read and often quoted, we may give the close of his refutation of the Atomic Theory, at the end of the second lecture:—"It would behove the Atheists to give over such trifling as this, and resume the old solid way of confuting religion. They should deny the being of the soul because they cannot see it. This would be an invincible argument against us; for we can neither exhibit it to their touch, nor expose it to their view, nor show them the colour and complexion of a soul. They should dispute, as a bold brother of theirs did, that he was sure there was no God, because (says he) if there was one, he would have struck me to hell with thunder and lightning, that have so reviled and blasphemed him. This would be an objection, indeed. Alas! all that we could answer is in the next words to the text, 'that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge all the world in righteousness;' and the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God, which are some of His attributes and essential perfections of His Being, ought not to be abused and perverted into arguments against His Being. But if this will not do, we must yield ourselves overcome; for we neither can, nor desire, to 'command fire to come down from heaven to consume them,' and give them such experimental conviction of the existence of God. So that they ought to take these methods if they would successfully attack religion. But if they will still be meddling with atoms, be hammering and squeezing understanding out of them, I would

advise them to make use of their own understanding for the instance. Nothing, in my opinion, would run us down more effectually than that; for we readily allow, that if any understanding can possibly be produced by such a clashing of senseless atoms, it is that of an atheist, which has the finest pretensions and the best title to it. We know it is 'The fool that hath said in his heart, there is no God;' and it is no less a truth than a paradox, that there are no greater *fools* than atheistical *wits*, and none so credulous as infidels. No article of religion, though as demonstrable as the nature of the thing can admit, hath credibility enough for them, and yet these cautious and quick-sighted gentlemen can write and swallow down this sottish opinion about percipient atoms, which exceeds in incredibility all the fictions of Æsop's Fables. For is it not every whit as likely, or more, 'that cocks and bulls might discourse,' and hinds and panthers hold conferences about religion, as that atoms can do so—that atoms can invent arts and sciences, can institute society and government, can make leagues and confederacies, can devise methods of peace, and stratagems of war? And, moreover, the modesty of mythology deserves to be commended; the scenes there are laid at a distance: it is, Once upon a time, in the days of yore, in the land of Utopia, there was a dialogue between an oak and a cedar;—whereas the atheist is so impudently silly as to bring the farce of his atoms upon the theatre of the present age; to make dull, senseless matter transact all private and public affairs, by sea and by land, in houses of parliament and closets of princes. Can any credulity be comparable to this? If a man should affirm that an ape, casually meeting with pen, ink, and paper, and falling to scribble, did happen to write exactly the Leviathan of Thomas Hobbes, would an atheist believe such a story?"

Perhaps the reader has now had enough of this Attic style of controversy. This slashing style of criticism is all very well when applied to secular topics, but when such solemn and important themes are dealt with, it seems strangely out of place.

In 1694 Bentley was appointed Keeper of the King's Library, and in the same year was a second time appointed Boyle Lecturer. His subject was a defence of Christianity against the objections of infidels. Though the first series had been so eminently successful, Bentley never published the second, possibly because there were some additional topics he was desirous of investigating, but had not had time to attend to till the proper season for printing had elapsed. In 1696 he quitted Bishop Stillingfleet's to occupy his apartments as Royal Librarian. In 1696, also, he took his degree of Doctor of Divinity, and transmitted to his friend Grævius at Utrecht a series of notes and emendations upon Callimachus, which were appended to that scholar's edition of the poet, and added very materially to its value.

We have now to consider that great controversy which was the means of producing from Bentley his *magnum opus*, and which of all literary squabbles is perhaps the most interesting, not so much on account of the main issue, which was soon lost sight of in the consideration of minor matters, as for the eminence of the combatants on both sides, and the fierceness and energy with which the battle was carried on. A full account of it would form a very entertaining chapter in literary history, but that cannot be given here, so we shall only describe what relates directly to the share Bentley took in it.

In 1692, Sir William Temple published a very foolish essay on "Ancient and Modern Learning," in which he discusses their comparative excellence, and decides in

favour of the former. When we mention that, among eminent moderns, he omits to mention such names as Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Newton, the value of this production may readily be conceived. But what mainly concerns our purpose is, that he remarked that "the oldest books extant were still the best of their kind;" and to prove his point, cited what he believed to be the most ancient prose books written by profane authors, the "Fables of Æsop," and the "Epistles of Phalaris." "As the first," he says, "has been agreed by all ages since, for the greatest master in his kind, and all others of that sort have been imitations of his original; so, I think, the 'Epistles of Phalaris' to have more race, more spirit, more force of wit and genius, than any others I have ever seen, either ancient or modern." This extraordinary judgment was the occasion of a controversy which, for a time, convulsed the literary world, and gave Bentley an opportunity of showing himself the greatest classical critic the world has ever seen. "Such great events from little causes spring."

It was the practice of Dr Aldrich, the Dean of Christ Church, to employ the most eminent of the younger members of that fraternity in preparing new editions of classical authors, and he used to present a copy of one of these publications as a new-year's gift to every young man in his college. Now, when Phalaris had been so warmly commended by a critic of such refined taste and sound judgment, what writer more suitable than he to be chosen as a subject for a young scholar's lucubrations? Phalaris was accordingly fixed upon, and as his editor was chosen the Honourable Charles Boyle, brother of the Earl of Orrery, a young man distinguished for his studious habits and courteous manner.

Boyle, who doubtless had the assistance of older heads,

appears to have entered upon his duties with considerable avidity. For the service of the edition he desired to have collations made of all the manuscript copies accessible. One of these was in St James' Library, of which Bentley was keeper. Boyle therefore wrote to a bookseller, Bennet, desiring him to have the manuscript collated. Bennet, who through the former part of this transaction seems to have behaved with great carelessness, and through the latter part with great duplicity, delayed asking the manuscript till 1694, when Bentley replied, that he should be happy in an opportunity of obliging Mr Boyle, a young man related to the illustrious founder of his lecture, and that he would help him to the book. In a conversation between him and the bookseller, when asked his opinion of the work on which Mr Boyle was employed, Bentley replied "that he need not be afraid of undertaking it, since the good names of those that recommended it would ensure its sale; but that the book was a spurious one, and unworthy of a new edition." To excuse himself for his carelessness in procuring the collation, Bennet wrote to Oxford saying, that he had long solicited the manuscript in vain, and that Bentley had spoken with contempt both of the book and its editors.

At length Bennet, whose conduct throughout deserves the severest reprehension, procured the manuscript, but as Bentley was going out of town in a few days, he told him that no time must be lost in making the collation, as the book must be replaced in the library before his departure. There was abundance of time to accomplish the collation; but Bennet neglected to send the manuscript to Gibson, the collator, till the very last moment, so that by the time that it had to be returned, only forty Epistles had been despatched. For all this delay, Bennet represented to his employers that Bentley had been respon-

sible, whereas in reality to him not a shadow of blame could be attached.

In 1695 came out Boyle's edition of Phalaris, in the preface to which it was stated that, up to the fortieth letter, he had taken care to have the book collated with the King's manuscript; but that the librarian had denied him the further use of it agreeably to his peculiar courtesy (*pro singulari sua humanitate*). Bentley, on hearing of this, immediately wrote to Boyle, explaining the true facts of the case as we have stated them, and assuring him that his suspicions of intended discourtesy were unfounded. Boyle, however, rejected all pacific overtures, and coolly replied, "that what Mr Bentley had said in his own behalf *might* be true, but that the bookseller had represented the matter quite otherwise, and to him he was advised to prefer his complaint." He added, that if this account had been received before, he should have considered of it; but that, after the publication, it was too late to interpose; and that Mr Bentley might seek his redress by any method he pleased.

Thus was the gauntlet of war thrown down, but Bentley was in no hurry to take it up. However, when a second edition of his friend Wotton's "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning" was called for, Bentley took advantage of a promise previously made to prove the "Epistles of Phalaris" and "Æsop's Fables" spurious productions. The Epistles he proves to be forgeries, first, from their chronology, then from their language, and then from their matter, and concludes with the argument of their late appearance in the world. In contrast to Sir William Temple's glowing eulogium upon the matter of the Epistles, he writes: "It would be endless to prosecute this part, and show all the silliness and impertinency in the matter of the Epistles. For, take them in

the whole bulk, if a great person would give me leave, I should say, they are a fardle of commonplaces, without life or spirit from action and circumstance. Do but cast your eye upon Cicero's letters, or any statesman's, as Phalaris was; what lively characters of men there! what descriptions of place! what notifications of time! what particularity of circumstance! what multiplicity of designs and events! When you return to these again, you feel, by the emptiness and deadness of them, that you converse with some dreaming pedant with his elbow on his desk; not with an active, ambitious tyrant, with his hand on his sword, commanding a million of subjects." Boyle's Edition of Phalaris is then subjected to a severe criticism, and the *pro singulari sua humanitate* does not pass without due animadversion. In conclusion, "Æsop's Fables," as we now have them, are easily proved to be the compilation of a monk Planudes. So much for Sir William Temple's two oldest prose writers! It is almost superfluous to say that this, like all Bentley's writings, is written in a tone of immense superiority, which in this case, indeed, he had a perfect right to assume.

The publication of Bentley's dissertation raised a commotion among learned circles such as has rarely been equalled. Who was he, a mere retired scholar, a groper among old manuscripts and lexicographers, at the best but a plodding bookworm, to set his opinion against that of Sir William Temple, a man of fashion and culture, who had passed his life in the courts of princes and the palaces of the great? "Few things in literary history," says Macaulay, "are more extraordinary than the storm which this little dissertation raised. Bentley had treated Boyle with forbearance; but he had treated Christ Church with contempt: and the Christ Church men, wherever dispersed, were as much attached to their college as a Scotch-

man to his country, or a Jesuit to his order. Their influence was great. They were dominant at Oxford, powerful in the Inns of Court and in the College of Physicians, conspicuous in Parliament, and in the literary and fashionable circles of London. Their unanimous cry was, that the honour of the college must be vindicated, that the insolent Cambridge pedant must be put down."

In 1698 appeared the work which was intended to crush Bentley for ever—"Dr Bentley's Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris and the Fables of Æsop, examined by the Honourable Charles Boyle, Esq." Though this production bore Boyle's name on the title-page, most of it was not written by him, but by a fraternity of Christ Church wits and scholars, Atterbury taking the principal part. Smalridge, Friend, and others also contributed portions. On its first appearance the popularity of this work was boundless, which will not be wondered at by those who have looked though it. Not only are the arguments against Bentley advanced in an extremely plausible manner—in point of style it is a most entertaining book, and any one coming across it, even though he knows nothing about the questions it discusses, may pass some very amusing hours turning over its pages. As to its real value, Macaulay has discussed it in his most trenchant style. "The book," he writes, "is indeed Atterbury's masterpiece, and gives a higher notion of his powers than any of those works to which he put his name. That he was altogether wrong on the main question and on all the collateral questions springing out of it, that his knowledge of the language, the literature, and the history of Greece was not equal to what many freshmen now bring up every year to Cambridge and Oxford, and that some of his blunders seem to deserve a flogging rather

than a refutation, is true; and therefore it is that his performance is, in the highest degree, interesting and valuable to a judicious reader. It is good by reason of its exceeding badness. It is the most extraordinary instance that exists of making much show with little substance." Perhaps the best part of the book is the grave ironical argument to prove that, on his own principles, Bentley could not be the author of his own pamphlet. This is, indeed, very admirable fooling, and a few extracts may not be uninteresting. It must be remembered that the fun consists in the adoption of Bentley's own words almost throughout.

"If Dr Bentley's Dissertations should outlive some centuries, which I am far from thinking they will; and should be read, which I am still further from suspecting; and should the critics of succeeding ages start a dispute whether they be genuine or not; I am of opinion as strong and confident arguments may be brought to prove them spurious and falsely ascribed to Dr Bentley, as any the Doctor has used to show the letters now in debate to be a thousand years later than Phalaris. . . . I think he would or might, in Dr Bentley's way or manner, and for the most part in his very words too, argue against their being truly his to whom they are ascribed. 'The sophist, whoever he was, that wrote these loose dissertations in the name and character of Dr Bentley (give me leave to say this now, which I shall prove by and by) had not so bad a hand at humouring and personating, but that some may believe it is the librarian himself who talks so big; and may not discover the ass under the skin of that lion in criticism and philology. But . . . I am very much mistaken in the nature and force of my proofs, if any man hereafter that reads them persist in his opinion of making Dr Bentley the author of these criticisms. Had all

other ways failed us of detecting this impostor, yet his very speech had betrayed him, for it is that neither of a scholar nor an Englishman, neither Greek, Latin, nor English, but a medley of all three; he had forgotten that the scene of these writings was London, where the English tongue was generally spoken and written; as, besides other testimonies, the very thing speaks itself in the remains of London authors, as the Gazettes, the cases written by London divines, and others. How comes it to pass, then, that our Doctor writes not in English, but in a language further removed from the true English idiom than the Doric Greek was from the Attic? Why does Dr Bentley, an Englishman, write a new language which no Englishman before ever spoke or wrote? How comes his speech neither to be that of the learned, nor that of his country, but a mixed parti-coloured dialect, formed out of both? Pray, how came that idiom to be the court language of St James's?

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"But were it possible to produce an author of the same country and age with Dr Bentley, who wrote in the language of this dissertation, yet still, it is absurd to think that one of his education, character, and station should be the author of it; for Dr Bentley is known to have appertained to the family of a Right Reverend prelate, who was the great ornament of that age; to have had a university education, and to have conversed much in the city and at court; and with these advantages, he could not but be more refined than the writer of this piece of criticism, who, by his manner of expressing himself, shows that he was taken up with quite other thoughts and different images from those that used to fill the heads of such as had a learned and liberal education; for this sophist is a perfect Dorian in his language, in his thoughts,

and in his breeding. The familiar expressions of 'taking one tripping,' 'coming off with a whole skin,' 'minding his hits,' 'a friend at a pinch,' 'going to blows,' 'setting horses together,' 'going to pot,' with others borrowed from the sports and employments of the country, show our author to have been acquainted with another sort of exercise than that of the schools.

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"The sophist is not more happy in personating Dr Bentley, when, through the whole course of these dissertations, he represents him as a fierce and angry writer, and one who, when he thinks he has advantage over another man, gives him no quarter. For the writer of the Epistle to Dr Mill, when he had just reason to be very severe on some who had taken wrong measures in deducing the etymology of a Greek word, thus represses his indignation: 'But I will not say anything severely of them; it is not in my nature to trample on the prostrate.' This shows him to have been a man of temper and good nature; but our sophist represents him as one who has no mercy upon his adversary, when he thinks he has him in his power. The supposed editors of Phalaris, for an imagined mistake in a point of criticism, are exposed as 'nonsensical blunderers;' persons who had 'neither skill nor industry,' neither 'knowledge nor ingenuity;' to be 'like Leucon's asses, a degree below sorry critics;' to 'write directly against grammar and common sense;' and are set out to the world under this low and rude similitude, 'here are your workman to mend an author, as bungling tinkers do old kettles.' What a difference is there between the two letter writers. Mr Bentley is calm and forgiving, but Dr Bentley is furious and unrelenting; Dr Mill's friend scorns to insult over the prostrate, but Mr Wotton's friend pursues the blow. And do you not yet begin to suspect the credit of the dissertations?'"

The motto of Boyle's book was bold and confident :—

"Remember Milo's end ;
Wedged in the timber which he strove to rend."

And for a time it did indeed appear as if Bentley had quietly succumbed to the attack. But his intimate friends knew better. "Indeed," he said, "I am in no pain about the matter ; for it is a maxim with me that no man was ever written out of reputation but by himself." The popular opinion, however, was that he had been utterly discomfited. Garth, in his "Dispensary," has the following couplet, which expressed the almost universal opinion of the time, though now never quoted but to be ridiculed :—

"So diamonds take a lustre from their foil ;
And to a Bentley 'tis we owe a Boyle."

Two years after the publication of Boyle's book appeared Bentley's reply, and then, says Macaulay (Essay on Sir William Temple) : "The illusion was soon dispelled. Bentley's answer for ever settled the question, and established his claim to the first place among classical scholars. Nor do those do him justice who represent the controversy as a battle between wit and learning. For, though there is a lamentable deficiency of learning on the side of Boyle, there is no want of wit on the side of Bentley. Other qualities, too, as valuable as either wit or learning, appear conspicuously in Bentley's book—a rare sagacity, an unrivalled power of combination, a perfect mastery of all the weapons of logic. He was greatly indebted to the furious outcry which the misrepresentations, sarcasms, and intrigues of his opponents had raised against him—an outcry in which fashionable and political circles joined, and which was echoed by thousands who did not know whether Phalaris ruled in

Sicily or in Siam. His spirit, daring even to rashness, self-confident even to negligence, and proud even to insolent ferocity, was awed for the first and for the last time, awed not into meanness or cowardness, but into wariness and sobriety. For once he ran no risks; he left no crevice unguarded; he wantoned in no paradoxes; above all, he returned no railing for the railing of his enemies. In almost everything he has written we can discover proofs of genius and learning. But it is only here that his genius and learning appear to have been constantly under the guidance of good sense and good temper. Here we find none of that besotted reliance on his own power and on his own luck which he showed when he undertook to edit Milton, none of that perverted ingenuity which deforms so many of his notes on Horace, none of that disdainful carelessness by which he laid himself open to the keen and dexterous thrust of Middleton, none of that extravagant vaunting and savage scurrility by which he afterwards dishonoured his studies and his profession, and degraded himself almost to the level of De Pauw."

We have now arrived at that event in Bentley's life which was at once his glory and his shame—his appointment as Master of Trinity College in 1700. It was his glory inasmuch as, by the vastness of his learning, the greatness of his reputation, the strength and vigour of his character, the wideness of his acquaintance with scholars of all countries, and the respect in which he was held by them, none seemed more qualified than he to hold the dignified and responsible position of head of a great and opulent college. It was his shame inasmuch as, by the tyranny of his conduct, the coarseness of his language, and the unscrupulousness of his measures, he embittered against him a large and powerful section of

the Fellows, and for about thirty-eight years the peace and harmony of the College were disturbed by a series of quarrels and lawsuits. He seems to have entered Trinity in the spirit of an invader. Tradition says that, being congratulated upon a promotion so little to have been expected by a member of St John's College, he replied, in no very reverent application of the words of the Psalmist, "By the help of my God, I have leaped over the wall."

Bishop Stillingfleet is reported to have once said, "We must send Bentley to rule over the turbulent Fellows of Trinity College; if anybody can do it, he is the person; for I am sure that he has ruled my family ever since he entered it." Bentley had not long occupied his new dignity when he showed in many ways that he was not only determined to rule, but to rule alone, and in no way to bear any "brother near his throne." The reins of discipline had been held very slackly by his predecessor Dr Montague; hence the strictness of Bentley, and his autocratic conduct, were felt all the more keenly by the Fellows. Bentley was a man of a type of character perhaps not very uncommon. To anyone who resisted his imperious will, he was vindictive, unjust, and tyrannical; while, like Cardinal Wolsey, to those who sought his favour, and looked up to him with the deference which he considered his due, he was always "sweet as summer." To enter into all the details of Bentley's squabbles and lawsuits with Trinity College would be neither profitable nor interesting, and we shall touch upon them very slightly. Yet so large a part of Bentley's life do they occupy, that more than half of Bishop Monk's biography of him is taken up with them. Those who are fond of legal quibbles and hair splittings, and who like to follow the course of a lawsuit through all its many tedious and

apparently interminable involutions, will find plenty there to gratify their fancy.

In 1701 Bentley married Joanna Bernard, a lady who had been a visitor in Bishop Stillingfleet's family, and whose family connections were numerous and distinguished. The marriage was a singularly happy one, the lady being marked by a sweet and amiable disposition, as well as by a cultivated mind. She is mentioned with applause and sympathy even in publications written for the purpose of injuring the character and fortunes of her husband. The quiet happiness of Bentley's domestic life is in striking contrast to the restless turbulence of his public career, and shows that at heart, with all his outward roughness, he was a good-natured man.

Many things in Bentley's early management of Trinity College are highly commendable. He built an observatory, a chemical laboratory, and so improved the College chapel as to make it one of the finest in existence. He also devoted much attention to the University press, and from it were issued during his Mastership at least two magnificent works, a fine edition of "Suidas," in three volumes, edited by his friend Kuster, whom he aided by his advice and assistance, and a new and improved edition of Newton's "Principia." But all these things, and many others of the same kind could only be executed by heavy drains on the pockets of the Fellows, and the complaints against Bentley grew loud and deep.

While engaged in all these occupations of a business kind, scholarship was not neglected. Nothing can be a better evidence of Bentley's genuine enthusiasm as a scholar than the fact, that however deeply immersed in outward affairs, however much perplexed and harassed by business anxieties, his devotion to study continued unabated. His friend Kuster being engaged upon an edi-

tion of "Aristophanes," Bentley addressed to him three "Critical Epistles" upon that author, the substance of which was incorporated into his notes, where they shine as stars in the firmament. He also carried on an active correspondence with Hemsterhuis, Spanheim, Grævius, and other continental scholars, most of whom looked up to Bentley with admiring respect, as their acknowledged master in the world of classical criticism. John Davies, a great admirer of Bentley, being passing an edition of Cicero's "Tusculan Questions" through the press, Bentley added thereto, in 1709, a body of emendations, where he lashes without mercy, but with strict justice, the ignorance and presumption of James Gronovius, a well known scholar of the day, and perhaps the most voluminous of classical editors. Gronovius, who had all his life been an unscrupulous vilifier of other scholars, now reaped what he had sown, by being held up to ridicule in Bentley's most sarcastic manner.

Bentley's next work was of a somewhat similar kind. The celebrated Le Clerc being desirous to figure as a man of universal erudition, published an edition of the fragments of the comic poets, Menander and Philemon. Though this was a work requiring peculiar judgment and tact, and an accurate acquaintance with the comic metres, Le Clerc was deficient in all these respects, yet he had the incredible effrontery to say that he had always felt great delight in these remnants of Greek comedy, and had collected and transcribed them for his own amusement, both which statements were unquestionably lies. For some reason or other, Bentley determined to expose this book, and accordingly wrote extemporal emendations on three hundred and twenty-three passages in the "Fragments," with a running commentary of unsparing severity directed against Le Clerc. By some circuitous

channel he conveyed this work into the hands of Peter Burman, who bitterly hated Le Clerc, and by whom it was published, with an insulting preface, as written by "Phileleutherus Lipsiensis." On publication, the real Phileleutherus was immediately detected, as it was known only one living scholar could have treated such a subject with so much learning. Le Clerc never regained his former position after this exposure. The book in which he was attacked sold so well, that in three weeks the whole impression was exhausted; and henceforth Le Clerc was looked on as an ignorant pretender in Greek literature.

All these works of Bentley, however, though very valuable in their way, were mere trifles compared to the great work on which, for ten years, he had been engaged, and which, in 1711, first saw the light. We mean his edition of "Horace," "the most instructive, perhaps," according to De Quincey, "of all contributions whatsoever to Latin literature." It was ushered into the world with a most adulatory dedication to Lord Oxford, whom, for reasons connected with his college lawsuits, it was then Bentley's interest to conciliate. It was observed by Bentley's antagonists that, "whenever he had finished a book, he presented it to some great men at Court, with a panegyrical oration so conceived that it would fit any man in a great post, and the highest bidder had it;" and various instances seem to show that this accusation was not without a measure of truth. The preface is written in a very different tone from the dedication: arrogant, contemptuous, and boastful; he writes like a man who is so sure of his immense superiority over other scholars, that their opinions are scarcely worth mentioning in comparison with his. As Dr Monk says, the language of the preface is so vainglorious as almost to challenge that severity

of examination which his edition of "Horace" has experienced beyond all parallel in literary history. He describes at some length the characteristics of the ideal critic, pretty plainly indicating that he regarded himself as that model individual. "In the book itself," writes a competent judge, "the knowledge derived from the most profound study of the author; the intimate acquaintance with the idiom of his language; the occasional carelessness and inaccuracy; the rage for unnecessary emendation, as if for the sake of showing his ingenuity and skill; the unparalleled ingenuity and skill thus displayed; the determination to give a new explanation to that which is clear and simple, equalled only by Warburton's 'Annotations to Shakespeare;' and the alternate quick perception of the cleverness and quiet humour, with the cold and pedantic insensibility to the bolder flights of his poet —these characteristics of Bentley's edition are known in some degree to every reader of 'Horace,' that is, to every one of liberal education, from the schoolboy to the most mature man of letters." Perhaps never did any edition of a classical author excite so much popular interest. It was attacked in sixpenny pamphlets, in *jeu d'esprits* of men about town, and received a more serious assault from a schoolmaster of the name of Ker, who, having an old grudge against Bentley, took this opportunity of putting forth in the most glaring light some faults in the great scholar's Latinity. In the midst of these attacks, however, Bentley continued to receive letters from distinguished scholars, British and foreign, complimenting him upon his noble edition of "Horace." His old antagonist, Atterbury, wrote him to say how much pleasure and instruction he had received from that excellent performance, at the same time owning the uneasiness he felt when he found how many things there were in "Horace" which,

after thirty years' acquaintance with him, he had not fully understood.

Five years after the publication of Bentley's Horace, it was bitterly attacked in a publication entitled *Aristarchus Ante-Bentleianus*, written by Richard Johnson, the master of Nottingham school. This Johnson is supposed to have been a fellow-student with Bentley at St John's College, and his attack seems to have had its origin in personal malice or hatred. Though his book is disfigured by its petulance and want of temper, it is not without some happy passages. In particular, the following burlesque criticism upon some lines of *Tom Bostock*, an old English ballad, in ridicule of the style of Bentley's notes, has considerable cleverness, and is really not a bad English imitation of some of the more rash and arrogant of the critic's Latin comments :—

"And now my hand's in, after the example of great authors and the Doctor in particular, I shall not think much of my labour, for the reader's benefit, the honour of the English nation in general, and the family of the Bostocks in particular, to put down one stanza of a certain English Marine Ode, for so in good truth it is, and so it is entitled in all the parchments, and the first editions; how in the latter it came to be called a Ballad, I, for my part, can't tell; let them look to it that were the cause of it. But 'tis high time to put down the place. Why so it runs then—

'Then old Tom Bostock he fell to the work ;
He prayed like a Christian, but fought like a Turk,
And cut 'em all off in a jerk,
Which nobody can deny,' &c.

"Now you must understand, this Tom Bostock was chaplain, in Latin, *capellanus*, in a sea fight, a long time

ago, and after the enemy had boarded the ship, cut 'em all off to a man. O brave Tom! Thus much for the interpretation. Now to the reading.

"*Old.* I have a shrewd suspicion that all is not sound at bottom here, how sound a complexion soever the words may seem to have. For why *old*, pray ye? What! he hewed down so many lusty fellows at fourscore, I'll warrant ye? A likely story! I know there is an *old boy* as well as any of ye; but what then? And I could down with *old Tom* in another place, but not here.

"For, once again, I say, why *old* Tom? What! when he was commending him for so bold an action, would he rather say *old* Tom than *bold* Tom? Was it not a bold action? Is not the word *bold* necessary in this place? And do you find it anywhere else? Then, therefore, ne'er be afraid of being too bold; no, rather boldly read *bold* Tom, I'll hear thee out, in Latin *me vide.* But you'll say, neither edition nor manuscript hath this reading. I thought as much.

"What of all that? I suppose we have never a copy under the author's own hand: as for the librarians and editors, what can you expect from such cattle as they, but such stuff as this? One grain of sense (and, God be thanked, I don't want that) weighs more with me than a ton of their papers.

"*Tom.* Some would fain make us believe that we are to read *Ben* here: much good may it do 'em with their *Ben.* I for my part shall never believe that the poet would ever put *Ben* and *Bostock*, two words beginning with a B, so near together; such grating stuff wounds the ears; such stuff could never come from so terse a poet as you may guess by the work: for as for his name, though no pains have been wanting, nor charge neither, in getting manuscripts from all parts of the world, I'll

say that, for myself, I cannot recover it. Besides, who ever heard of a Ben of the Bostocks? Tom, George, and Harry I'll allow ye; but only Tom was the parson, though; and that this is spoken of the parson or chaplain of the ship is plain."

In 1713 Bentley replied under his old signature of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis to Anthony Collins's "Discourse of Free Thinking." Collins's book is quite a worthless production, and for Bentley to criticise it so severely as he did, was perhaps breaking a butterfly upon the wheel. Bentley's work is well worth looking at by the young classical student, as showing with what minute accuracy a first-rate scholar renders passages from the classic authors, giving full force to every inflection, every mood, almost to every letter. As Collins's work had attained great though ill-merited popularity, Bentley's exposure of it was received with universal applause by the orthodox.

But it is time something more should be said about Bentley's relations with Trinity College. Towards the end of 1709 an open rupture took place between the Master and the Senior Fellows, when the former is reported to have said, "From henceforth, farewell peace to Trinity College," words amply verified by the experience of subsequent years. The Seniors decided to appeal against the Master to the Visitor. Now the question arose—Who was Visitor? Through some ambiguity in the statutes a doubt existed as to whether the Bishop of Ely or the Crown was entitled to exercise this power. At length, in 1714, Bentley's trial came on before Bishop Moore, of Ely. He was pretty confident of victory, but his hopes were in danger of bitter disappointment. As to one charge—that of wasting the college goods—he made out a strong case in his favour;

but it was pretty evident that in some of his other acts he had gone beyond statute or precedent. "The affair took a serious, a menacing, a gloomy cast. Degradation from his splendid situation, humiliation before his despised antagonists in the eyes of the world, seemed impending over the head of the most arrogant man in England. The mind of the judge had so manifestly, in the course of the proceedings, betrayed a change which threatened discomfiture to Bentley, that during one of the hearings, when he expressed his unfavourable opinion on a certain point, 'the unexpected shock was too much even for the firm mind and strong nerves of Dr Bentley, and he fainted away in court.' The trial lasted six weeks; the sentence was prepared, when, behold! Bishop Moore, who had caught cold during the session, was taken ill, and died: the proceedings fell to the ground."

Thus was the first act of the drama ended. This is only one of the many instances of the extraordinary good luck that attended Bentley throughout his whole career. Obstacles always seemed to vanish at the very moment when it was most important for him that they should do so. Middleton, in one of the many tracts written against him, says "that his conduct is not in any way to be accounted for, except we could believe of him, what a modern historian relates of another tyrant and usurper, that he has found means of contracting with a certain invisible power for a lease of his government, to be insured to him against all hazards and events, till the charm be out, and his term expired." Bishop Fleetwood, the new Bishop of Ely, declined to act as Visitor, unless he could visit the Fellows as well as the Master. As several of the former were well aware that their character and conduct was not such as could stand a searching

examination, for a short time the controversy ceased, only, however, to blaze forth with greater violence than ever.

A word must be said about Bentley's opponents. One of the principal of these—perhaps *the* principal, so far as writing pamphlets against Bentley is concerned—was Dr Conyers Middleton, the biographer of Cicero, whom the dauntless Doctor saddled with the nickname of "Fiddling Conyers." Equally inveterate in his hostility to the Master was Dr Colbatch, the Professor of Casuistry, whom De Quincey calls "a malicious old toad," but who, in reality, appears to have been almost the only one of Bentley's adversaries who acted from entirely conscientious motives. In the earlier part of the contest Edward Miller, "a pestilent laywer," figures as the most important character. He gave Bentley's opponents the benefit of his legal acumen and learning, both of which were very considerable. However, at a comparatively early period, he was bought off, retiring from the contest with the reputation of a traitor, and £528 in his pocket.

The language Bentley used concerning his opponents, whether in public or in private, was certainly not such as to conciliate them. One of the articles against him runs thus:—"Why did you use scurrilous words and language to several of the Fellows, particularly by calling Mr Eden an ass, and Mr Rashleigh the college dog; by telling Mr Cock 'he would die in his shoes,' and calling others fools and sots, and other scurrilous names?" The Vice-Chancellor, Gooch, he termed "the empty *Gotch* of Caius." At some meeting, where, after a question had been long discussed, Dr Ashton observed that "it was not yet quite clear to him," the Master of Trinity briskly demanded, "Are we then to wait here till your mud has subsided?" Sherlock he nicknamed Cardinal Alberoni, an appellation which appeared so appropriate

that it long adhered to him. In allusion to his opponent Miller, he publicly remarked that "lawyers were the most ignominious people in the nation." It is related by Middleton that a certain head of a College, afterwards a Bishop, received no more courteous title than "Beelzebub."

The intense animosity with which his enemies regarded Bentley was only equalled by the admiring affection bestowed on him by his friends. By Dr Davies, the commentator on Cicero, he was looked upon with a veneration almost approaching to idolatry. Of the Fellows of Trinity admitted to his intimacy, his favourites were, Wotton, Barnwell, Whitfield, Ashenthurst, and R. Walker, immortalized in the well-known lines of Pope, where Bentley is made to exclaim:—

> "'Walker, our hat!'—no more he deigned to say;
> But, stern as Ajax' spectre, strode away."

This Walker was of all Bentley's friends perhaps the one most exclusively devoted to his interests. It is said of him by Dr Monk that he would have cheerfully risked his life in the protection of his Master. The devotion of some of Bentley's friends to him resembles nothing so much as the traditional devotion of the Highland clans to their chieftains. Through evil report and through good report they stuck by him. If he required any piece of work to be done, they were ready to do it. No matter though its performance was difficult, no matter though some scruples of conscience required to be overcome before they could engage in it, no matter though it exposed them to the odium and insult of most of the members of the University—so long as they won the approbation of the great man whose humble servants they were proud to be, they were content. The wonderful

success with which Bentley fought against his numerous and influential foes, is in great measure to be attributed to their exertions. But Bentley was not destitute of friends of another and a higher class. In London, which he frequently visited, he enjoyed the society of his old friend Sir Isaac Newton, of Dr Samuel Clarke, and of Dr Mead, the celebrated physician. It says much for Bentley, that not only his college acquaintances, but all these distinguished men, should, through all his difficulties, many of them of his own creating, have continued as much devoted to him as ever.

Of all the bold and unscrupulous things Bentley did, one of the boldest and most unscrupulous was his getting himself elected Regius Professor of Divinity. In the first place, he was not eligible for the post at all, the statute ordering that the Master of Trinity should not hold the professorship. However, this objection was overruled, one precedent being found where the statute had been set aside. But it so happened that of the seven electors six were decidedly hostile to his appointment, so that he could command no vote but his own. The electors were himself, the Vice-Chancellor, three Heads of Colleges, and the two senior Fellows of Trinity. The two latter were obliged to be absent, and Bentley managed to cajole the two next into supporting him. He contrived to procure the absence of the Vice-Chancellor from the University, and he himself became his deputy. His own place was then filled by his faithful friend Dr Davies. The meeting being summoned without delay, the four electors appeared, those opposed to Bentley remained aloof, knowing that their opposition was useless, and so he was unanimously appointed Professor, with a salary of about £600 a year.

To return once more to details of Bentley's literary life.

In 1715 he preached a sermon against Popery, in which the abuses of the Church of Rome were laid bare by no sparing hand. A good many readers may have been impressed by part of this sermon without knowing who was the author of it. A passage, describing the sufferings of a victim in the Inquisition, has been stolen without scruple by that arch-plagiarist, Sterne, and transferred to the pages of "Tristram Shandy," where it is said so to have overcome the feelings of Corporal Trim, who reads it, that he declares "he would not read another line of it for all the world." In 1716 Bentley first announced his great plan of publishing a critical edition of the Greek Testament. For four years he meditated over this design, sparing neither labour nor expense to procure collations of manuscripts. In 1720 he issued a prospectus and specimen of his work, stating the terms of subscription, &c. Conyers Middleton, who was not a particularly upright man, seized this opportunity of attacking Bentley's reputation. The prospectus and specimen had been drawn up in great haste, so that there were a good many errors in them, of which Middleton did not fail to make the most in his "Remarks on the Proposals," in which every paragraph and every sentence are closely analysed, with a determination to find Bentley wrong in all his remarks. Bentley, being under the impression that the "Remarks," which were published anonymously, were, in great measure at least, the production of Colbatch, issued a pamphlet in which he was attacked in the most virulent manner Bentley was master of. "Cabbage-head," "insect," "worm," "maggot," "vermin," "gnawing rat," "snarling dog," "ignorant thief," "mountebank," are a few of the choice terms to which he is treated. In reply to this Middleton wrote another pamphlet acknowledging himself as author, four times as

long as his former one, and written with the skill and caution of a practised controversialist. It has been often asserted that these attacks of Middleton were the cause of Bentley's edition of the New Testament being suspended, but this appears to be quite a mistake. Shortly after the appearance of Middleton's tract, he told Bishop Atterbury that "he scorned to read the rascal's book, but if his lordship would send him any part which he thought the strongest, he would undertake to answer it before night;" and there is full proof that for more than eight years after the attack he continued to procure collations as diligently as ever. Why Bentley did not publish this edition, which would doubtless have greatly increased his reputation, is still doubtful.

In the meantime the great quarrel between Bentley and the College steadily continued its course. With his usual good fortune, Bentley contrived to convict both his principal antagonists in turn of libel, or of offensive language to persons in authority. Middleton, in a pamphlet entitled "The true state of Trinity College," had declared that the Fellows of Trinity had not been able to find any proper court in England which would receive the complaints. By the Court of King's Bench this was considered as containing an undoubted libel upon the whole administration of justice in the kingdom. He was compelled to ask pardon, and heavily amerced in costs. Then the unfortunate Colbatch published a book called *Jus Academicum*, in support of the University jurisdiction, in which Bentley contrived to find some sentences liable to be construed into contempt of the Court of King's Bench. For this, in spite of all his efforts to obtain the intercession of the Crown, Colbatch was committed and condemned to a fine. The most disastrous point was the motto of the book—*Jura negat*

sibi nata, nihil non arrogat. The venerable judge, who had passed a long life in the study of law Latin, had forgotten whatever acquaintance he might have contracted with classical writers sixty years before, for he accused Colbatch of "applying to the court the most virulent verse in all Horace, *Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non* ABROGAT." The culprit immediately set him right as to Horace's word; and told him besides that the motto was intended to apply, not to the judges, but to Bentley. Sir Littleton, however, would not be driven from his stronghold; he thrice returned to this unhappy quotation, which accused their Lordships of "abrogating" the laws, and each time Colbatch was imprudent enough to interrupt and correct him. At last the court remarked to his counsel, Kettleby, that his client did not appear to be sensible of his being in contempt; and, to convince him of that fact, sentenced him to pay £50, to be imprisoned till it was paid, and to give security for his good behaviour for a year. No sooner was Colbatch thus brought low, than in the dedication to his Tract on the Arrangement of the Public Library, Middleton let fall some incautious expressions which appeared to impugn the authority of the Court of King's Bench. He, in turn, was fined £50, and ordered to find security for his good behaviour for a year. Middleton took his revenge by continuing his implacable hostility to Bentley. His last pamphlet against him concludes with the following sarcasm:— "Being conscious of no offence that my name has ever given, nor of any infamy to make it odious to any man except to himself, I am not at all ashamed of producing it; and since it is, as he says, to die with me and to be buried shortly in oblivion, he must excuse me the reasonable ambition of making the most of it while I live; and that I may have some chance for being known likewise

to posterity, I am resolved to fasten myself upon him, and stick as close to him as I can, in hopes of being dragged at least by his great name out of my present obscurity, and of finding some place, though an humble one, in the public annals of history; and being willing, before we part, to give him all the encouragement I can towards answering me, I here promise that, let him be as severe and scurrilous as he pleases upon my person, morals, or learning, I will not make myself so mean as to take the law of him, or prosecute printer, publisher, or author; I shall be content to vindicate my character with the proper weapons of an author, and do myself justice as well as I can; being ambitious of no greater reputation in the world than that I shall always find myself very well able to defend."

In 1722 Bentley committed to paper a copy of English verses. His was not a poetical mind, and for that very reason the verses possess considerable interest. Singularly enough, they have probably been more read than any of Bentley's other writings, owing to the fact that they are copied in "Boswell's Life of Johnson." Johnson pronounced them "the forcible verses of a man of strong mind, but not accustomed to write verses." They run as follows:—

"Who strives to mount Parnassus' hill,
And thence poetic laurels bring,
Must first acquire due force and skill,
Must fly with swan's or eagle's wing.

Who Nature's treasures would explore,
Her mysteries and arcana know,
Must high, as lofty Newton, soar;
Must stoop, as delving Woodward, low.

Who studies ancient laws and rites,
Tongues, arts, and arms, all history,
Must drudge, like Selden, day and night,
And in the endless labour die.

Who travels in religious jarrs,
 Truth mixed with error, shade with rays,
Like Whiston wanting pyx and stars
 In ocean wide, or sinks, or strays.

But grant our hero's hope, long toil
 And comprehensive genius crown,
All sciences, all arts, his spoil,
 Yet what reward, or what renown?

Envy, innate in vulgar souls,
 Envy steps in and stops his rise,
Envy with poisoned tarnish fouls
 His lustre, and his worth decries.

He lives inglorious or in want,
 To college and old books confined;
Instead of learned, he's called pedant,
 Dunces advanced, he's left behind;
Yet left content, a genuine stoic he
Great without patron, rich without South-sea."

In these lines Bentley doubtless designed to portray his own character. Certainly envy with poisoned tarnish often endeavoured to foul his lustre, but its efforts were never attended with much success. Neither did he by any means live inglorious or in want. The verses must have been written when he was in a fit of dejection, a state of mind most rare in him; for all accounts agree in stating, that even when fortune seemed most against him, the unconquerable old man kept up his accustomed gaiety of spirits. What in great measure sustained him was unquestionably the contempt he had for his adversaries. He not only hated them, he thoroughly despised them.

In 1725 Bentley published an edition of Terence, in which, according to no less an authority than Wolf, there are fewer things which ought to be rejected than in his

editions of other authors. The circumstances attending the publication of this work are rather curious. Bentley's friend, Dr Hare, the Dean of Worcester, had published an edition of Terence, in which all that was most valuable was borrowed without acknowledgment from the oral instructions of Bentley, who undoubtedly possessed more information about the Latin comic metres than any man living. Bentley was very naturally indignant that Hare should have turned to his own purposes the information extracted from his unsuspicious communications, and accordingly, as a means of revenge, published a rival edition in which Hare was severely criticised in caustic and contemptuous language. Hare is not named throughout the volume, being alluded to by various circumlocutions—"that learned man" being the term used when the sneer is meant to be particularly provoking. The subject of the versification of the Latin comic poets was one which interested Bentley to the last. Of his devotion to it, the following odd anecdote is told: "Dr Bentley, when he came to town, was accustomed, in his visits to Lord Carteret, sometimes to spend the evenings with his Lordship. One day old Lady Granville reproached her son with keeping the country clergyman, who was with him the night before, till he was intoxicated. Lord Carteret denied the charge; upon which the lady replied, that the clergyman could not have sung in so ridiculous a manner, unless he had been in liquor. The truth of the case was, that the singing thus mistaken by her ladyship was Dr Bentley's endeavour to instruct and entertain his noble friend, by reciting Terence according to the true *cantilena* of the ancients."

With that rashness which was only too habitual to him, Bentley added to his Terence an edition of Phrædus, with a view to anticipate Hare, who had announced his

intention of publishing an edition of that author. This was a very hasty performance, and quite unworthy of Bentley's genius. "In none of his publications," says Bishop Monk, "did he display so much presumption, as in putting forth this crude collection of new readings, supported by notes the jejuneness of which formed a remarkable contrast to his copious annotations upon Horace, and which were unworthy even to appear in the same volume with his edition of the Comedian; and never did he more expose himself to the attacks of his enemies, than when, at the suggestion of pique and resentment, he launched this puny and meagre performance into the troubled waters of criticism." This unfortunate production gave Hare an excellent opportunity for retaliating upon Bentley, which he did not fail to take advantage of. In an *Epistola Critica* he drew up a review of Bentley's notes, written with much personal acrimony, but with considerable justice and ability. With reference to this attack Bentley is reported to have observed of Hare, "that he had as much pride as himself, and a great deal more ill-nature." As for Hare, the bitterness of the controversy did not prevent him from retaining all his admiration of the learning and genius of Bentley, whom he is said to have continued almost to idolize. The unedifying spectacle of a dignitary of the church and a professor of theology carrying on a dispute on such a subject with so much asperity, did not pass without comment. Sir Isaac Newton is related to have complained that two such divines should "be fighting with one another about a playbook."

We have now to describe the most extraordinary and disastrous of Bentley's literary undertakings—his edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost"—which appeared in 1731. If Bentley's fame had not been built upon the most solid

foundations, this publication would have infallibly destroyed it, for no more rash and foolish production was ever issued from the press. It was apparently undertaken at the instigation of Queen Caroline, who wished to see the powers of the great critic exerted upon a subject she was capable of appreciating. In this work Bentley corrects the text of Milton much as he had corrected that of Horace, only, inasmuch as Horace was an author whose peculiar excellences he was much better qualified to appreciate than Milton's, he attained no success in the undertaking, which was a sufficiently ridiculous one at best. To excuse himself for interfering with the text of the great poet, he devised an imaginary personage in the character of an "Editor of Paradise Lost;" to him, and not to Milton, he pretends to attribute all those faults and defects he points out. In the preface he thus propounds this hypothesis: "Our celebrated author, when he composed this poem, being obnoxious to the Government, poor, friendless, and, what is worst of all, blind with a *gutta serena*, could only dictate his verses to be writ by another. Whence it necessarily follows, that any errors in spelling, pointing, nay, even in whole words of a like or near sound in pronunciation, are not to be charged upon the poet, but on the amanuensis.

"But more calamities than are yet mentioned have happened to our poem; for the friend or acquaintance, whoever he was, to whom Bentley committed his copy and the overseeing of the press, did so vilely execute that trust, that 'Paradise,' under his ignorance and audaciousness, may be said to be twice lost. A poor bookseller, then living near Aldersgate, purchased our author's copy for ten pounds, and (if a second edition followed) for five pounds more; as appears by the original bond, yet in being. This bookseller, and that acquaintance,

who seems to have been the sole corrector of the press, brought forth their first edition, polluted with such monstrous faults as are beyond example in any printed book.

"But these typographical faults, occasioned by the negligence of the acquaintance (if all may be imputed to that, and not several wilfully made), were not the worst blemishes brought upon our poem. For this supposed friend (called in the notes the editor), knowing Milton's bad circumstances; who

> 'Was fallen on evil days and evil tongues,
> With darkness and with dangers compassed round,
> And solitude;'

thought he had an opportunity to foist into the book several of his own verses, without the blind poet's discovery. The trick has been too frequently played; but especially in works published after an author's death. And poor Milton in that condition, with threescore years' weight upon his shoulders, might be reckoned more than half dead."

Of course this monstrous fiction was not intended to be believed—it was merely a device to take off the odium of perpetually condemning and altering Milton's words. A few specimens will give a better idea of the incredible absurdity and audacity of this edition than any description. The passage describing Raphael—who,

> "Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
> Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
> Of tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
> A phœnix, gazed by all, as that sole bird
> When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's
> Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies"—

is thus dismissed as spurious. "When our editor once begins with his similitudes, he knows not when to leave

off; but still blunders on, through sense or nonsense. Milton said, 'Raphael sailed between worlds and worlds,' wisely steered through the vacuous ether that lay between them. But the editor, in contradiction, tells us, he sailed 'sometimes on the polar winds,' which winds could not exist but within these worlds. And then, when he came so near to the earth, as eagles used to soar, he took the shape of a phœnix; and three verses are bestowed on the story of this phœnix. But why that shape, good master editor? Why, says he, to deceive all the fowls, who look and gaze at him as a true one. Was that a whim fit for an archangel, sent from heaven to earth on so important a commission? Is not this rare trifling? and among so many birds of grand magnitude and fine feather, could none content you but a phœnix, a fictitious nothing, that has no being but in tale and fable?"

The beautiful passage—

> "Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
> Soft she withdrew, and like a wood-nymph light
> Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
> Betook her to the groves, but Delia's self
> In gait surpassed, and goddess-like deport,
> Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,
> But with such gardening tools as art yet rude,
> Guiltless of fire, had formed, or angels brought.
> To Pales or Pomona thus adorned
> Likeliest she seemed, Pomona when she fled
> Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
> Yet virgin of Proserpine from Jove"—

is subjected to the following scathing criticism: "Here our editor thought he had a field before him to implant what he pleased. He seldom intermeddles in speeches, wherein Milton chiefly excels; but when anything of description will make way for him, he'll never fail to in-

trude his rubbish. We have had frequent accounts of Eve's beauty already; particularly when leaving Raphael and Adam she went to the groves; these most noble verses fully describe her charms:

> "With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
> Not unattended; for on her as queen
> A pomp of winning graces waited still;
> And from about her shot darts of desire
> Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight."

Yet now, when only she leaves Adam to go to the groves, the editor has a prolix attempt to describe her afresh, as if nothing had been said before; and yet he falls as much below the true Milton, in book viii., as a novice sign-dauber falls below a Titian or a Raphael. Let us see what fine work he makes. Instead of something real, he empties all his commonplace of mythology. She walked so light (a great commendation) as any wood-nymph, Oread or Dryad, or one of Diana's train; nay, she had a finer gait than Diana herself, though she had no bow or quiver; as if carrying a heavy quiver at her back made Diana walk more gracefully. Aye, but he alters his mind; and now she's 'likeliest' (he means *likest*) to Pales or Pomona; and yet not to Pomona always, but when she fled Vertumnus: Eve had here no such occasion to run away so fast. Aye, but she's like Ceres too: all these, even in fable, are unlike one another; and yet Eve is like them all. But she was like Ceres, when she was a maid, and in her prime,

> 'Yet virgin of Proserpine from Jove.'

I find the editor's goddesses, though immortal, have the decays of old age, grow past their prime, and then grey haired and wrinkled. But what monster of a phrase is that, 'virgin of Proserpine,' virgin of her daughter? Any-

one else that was minded to speak human language would have said,

> 'Like Ceres in her prime,
> Not mother yet of Proserpine by Jove.'

But it is time to leave this animal, and to try if we can find any mangled limbs of our poet scattered among this dozen of lines. These four, with the help of surgery, have the features of Milton:

> 'Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
> Soft she withdrew, and hastened to the groves
> Armed with such gardening tools, as art yet rude,
> Guiltless of fire, had formed, or angels brought.'

All the nymphs and goddesses, whether in their prime or past it, will return to their right owner."

No wonder though this edition of Milton was a cause of immense jubilation to Bentley's enemies. It was received, in the words of the injured poet, with

> "On all sides, from innumerable tongues
> A dismal, universal hiss—the sound
> Of public scorn."

Bentley's friends kept a judicious silence, for there was really nothing to be said in behalf of his work. It was not only very bad itself—it had a tendency to make his other works appear bad. He amended the text of Milton in about a thousand places, and most of his changes are such as no man of real poetic feeling would have made, and of which even the most commonplace reader can see the absurdity. Into his edition of Horace, between seven and eight hundred emendations are introduced. Now, it is impossible to avoid the uncomfortable reflection, that when most of the emendations of Milton appear so absurd to an Englishman, the emendations of Horace

would have appeared equally absurd to a Roman. Yet the reflection is not a correct one. Horace is an author whose genius was much better adapted to Bentley's comprehension than Milton's, and moreover, Bentley's acquaintance with, and appreciation of, Roman literature was incomparably superior to his knowledge of English literature. Nevertheless, the edition of Milton must have been a great shock to those who looked upon Bentley as a verbal critic, whose judgments were infallible. For the time his great classical achievements were lost sight of, the ridiculousness of his Milton was alone remembered, and Bentley's name was never mentioned in the periodicals of the day without a sneer. Yet Bentley's Milton is now almost wholly forgotten, while of the majority of his classical works, the fame stands as high or higher than it did at the time of their publication. There cannot be a better illustration of the comfortable axiom, that during his lifetime an author's fame will often be estimated by his worst work, but that, if remembered at all by posterity, he will be remembered by his best.

It would be difficult to name any writer who was subjected to more abuse and sarcasm than Bentley. Not only the penny-a-liners of the "Grub Street Journal," and other miscellanies of that description, delighted to satirise the great scholar as best they could,—he somehow managed to gain the inveterate enmity of many of the leading writers of the day—of Swift, of Pope, of Bolingbroke, of Arbuthnot. Perhaps all these enmities may be traced to the Phalaris dispute. Sir William Temple being Swift's patron, Swift, as in duty bound, made Bentley as ridiculous as possible in the "Battle of the Books." For Pope's vain desire to make Bentley contemptible, Dr Johnson says he had never heard any adequate reason. Swift, whose influence over Pope's mind was very considerable,

perhaps was the first to give Pope a prejudice against Bentley, and this early prejudice was doubtless much increased by a remark Bentley made shortly after the publication of Pope's *Iliad*, "that it was a very pretty poem, but that he must not call it Homer." When asked in his latter days what had been the cause of Pope's dislike, he replied, "I talked against his 'Homer,' and the portentous cub never forgives." In the opening lines of the fourth book of the 'Dunciad,' Bentley is honoured with the following notice:—

"As many quit the streams that murmuring fall
To lull the sons of Marg'ret and Clare Hall,
Where Bentley late tempestuous wont to sport
In troubled waters, but now sleeps in Port.
Before them marched that awful Aristarch;
Plowed was his front with many a deep remark:
His hat, which never vailed to human pride,
Walker with rev'rence took, and laid aside.
Low bowed the rest: he, kingly, did but nod;
So upright Quakers please both man and God.
'Mistress! dismiss that rabble from your throne:
Avaunt—Is Aristarchus yet unknown?
The mighty scholiast, whose unwearied pains
Made Horace dull, and humbled Milton's strains.
Turn what they will to verse, their toil is vain:
Critics like me shall make it prose again.
Roman and Greek grammarians! know your better,
Author of something yet more great than letter;
While tow'ring o'er your alphabet, like Saul
Stands our digamma, and o'er tops them all.'"

There appears little doubt that the enmity to Bentley of Bolingbroke and Arbuthnot was, in part at least, due to Pope. Arbuthnot wrote a sequel to "Gulliver's Travels," under the title of, "An Account of the State of Learning

in the Empire of Lilliput, together with the History and Character of Bullum, the Emperor's Library-keeper." This is a clever tract, as all Arbuthnot's are, and the satire against Bentley is as keen and unsparing as any to which he was subjected. A brief quotation, the allusions in which will be readily appreciated by those who have perused the preceding pages, will show the style of the satire: "Bullum is a tall, raw-boned man, I believe near six inches and a half high; from his infancy he applied himself with great industry to the old Blefuscudian language, in which he made such a progress, that he almost forgot his native Lilliputian: and at this time he can neither write nor speak two sentences without a mixture of the old Blefuscudian. These qualifications, joined to an undaunted forward spirit, and a few good friends, prevailed with the Emperor's grandfather to make him keeper of his library, and a Mulro in the Gomflastru; though most men thought him fitter to be one of the Royal Guards. These places soon helped him to riches, and upon the strength of them he soon began to despise everybody, and to be despised by everybody. This engaged him in many quarrels, which he managed in a very odd manner; whenever he thought himself affronted he immediately flung a great book at his adversary, and, if he could, felled him to the earth; but if his adversary stood his ground and flung another book at him, which was sometimes done with great violence, then he complained to the Grand Justiciary that these affronts were designed to the Emperor, and that he was singled out only as being the Emperor's servant. By this trick he got that great officer to favour him, which made his enemies cautious, and him insolent." Another book in which Bentley is attacked is a "Poem on Verbal Criticism, addressed to Mr Pope," by the

notorious David Mallet. Apparently Pope had lent the assistance of his pen to this production, which contains some good lines and many bad.

Of the pamphlets published against Bentley in his capacity of Master of Trinity, no enumeration can be attempted—their name is legion. To these he sometimes replied, and sometimes passed them over in contemptuous silence. The great quarrel, which had been carried on for about thirty-eight years with but short and treacherous intervals of peace, was now to be brought to a close. After many struggles Bentley's assailants had managed to get the cause brought before Bishop Greene, who then held the See of Ely. On the 27th of April, 1734, a final judgment was pronounced on this long-protracted cause. "The hall being full of anxious auditors, Bishop Greene appeared without his assessors; the result being anticipated, Dr Andrews, as counsel for the Master, immediately rose and begged that his Lordship would defer giving sentence till his assessors could be present, and deliver their opinions. This the Bishop peremptorily refused; but, being asked whether they were consenting to his judgment, replied in the affirmative. He then declared, in terms of great solemnity, that Dr Bentley was proved guilty both of dilapidating the goods of his college, and violating its statutes, and had thereby incurred the penalty of deprivation appointed by these statutes; accordingly he pronounced him deprived of the Mastership of Trinity College."

Now, at last, Bentley's opponents appeared to have obtained a great victory. No course, apparently, was left to the old man but to retire from Trinity College, and pass the remainder of his days in undignified obscurity. But no, his enemies were amazed to see him remaining quietly in the Lodge of Trinity College, exercising his

official functions with the same undaunted spirit as before. The reason of this was that, according to the statute, the Master could only be degraded by the Vice-Master acting under the proper warrant. The Vice-Master was the Dr Walker already mentioned for his devotion to Bentley, who really appears to have been one of the best and truest friends man ever had. Of course he refused to execute the sentence. Mandamus after mandamus was applied for to compel him to do his duty. All in vain: the Court of King's Bench quashed them all for some technical flaw. At length, after about five years, the death of Bishop Greene put an end to the proceedings, and Bentley was left in secure enjoyment of his dignity. "The success of this struggle," says Dr Monk, "kept up with unexampled spirit and obstinacy for ten years, must be attributed principally to the acuteness, address, and skilful tactics of Dr Bentley himself, seconded by the zeal of his professional friend, Mr Greaves. Many persons would have sunk under the agitation of such proceedings, every stage of which threatened his ruin; but he was cool and collected in his operations, he never gave his enemies an advantage over him, nor ever failed to seize the right occasion for a successful manœuvre. His aim was always to distress and baffle his antagonists; while it must be allowed that he seemed strangely regardless of the opinion which might be entertained of the rectitude of his principles."

In 1732 Bentley commenced an edition of Homer, in which he proposed to reform the versification of the poet by the introduction of the digamma, the discovery of which was one of the triumphs of his acute genius. To undertake such a work was a very bold enterprise for a man whose years exceeded threescore and ten, and we are not surprised to learn that his notes were brought to

an end at the sixth book by his being seized with an attack of the palsy. His notes were transmitted to Heyne, when engaged upon his edition of the Iliad. Heyne has described in touching terms the rapture with which he beheld the hand of the venerable scholar.

The Homer was Bentley's last literary work, for an edition of Manilius, published in 1739, had been prepared for the press forty-five years before. Manilius, a peculiarly obscure and difficult author, seems always to have possessed a singular fascination for Bentley, and his edition contains many acute and ingenious emendations. An edition of Lucan, containing notes by Bentley, was published fourteen years after his death. This completes the long list of his classical labours, some trifling productions alone excepted.

In 1740 Mrs Bentley died, an affliction which must have pained Bentley deeply, for their union had been a singularly happy one. By her he had three children, a son called by his own name, and two daughters. Of the son, who obtained a fellowship at Trinity College, his contemporaries acknowledge the genius, but lament the desultory nature of his pursuits. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Mr Humphrey Ridge, a gentleman of good family in Hampshire. She was left a widow in less than a year, and returned to her father's house to solace by her attentions the afflictions of his declining years. In this she was joined by her sister, Mrs Cumberland, who passed much of her time with her family at Trinity Lodge. "Surrounded," we are told, "by such friends, the Doctor experienced the joint pressure of old age and infirmity as lightly as is consistent with the lot of humanity. He continued to amuse himself with reading, and though nearly confined to his chair, was able to enjoy the society of his friends, and several rising

scholars who sought the conversation of the veteran Grecian; with them he still discussed the readings of classical authors, recited Homer, and expounded the doctrine of the digamma."

Of Bentley in his old age, surrounded by the members of his family circle, his grandson, Richard Cumberland, has given some very interesting reminiscences in his entertaining "Memoirs." From these the following extracts are given by Dr Monk, and will be read with interest:—

"Of Dr Richard Bentley, my maternal grandfather, I shall next take leave to speak. Of him I have perfect recollection. His person, his dignity, his language, and his love fixed my early attention, and stamped both his image and his words upon my memory. His literary works are known to all, his private character is still misunderstood by many; to that I shall confine myself, and, putting aside the enthusiasm of a descendant, I can assert, with the veracity of a biographer, that he was neither cynical, as some have represented him, nor overbearing and fastidious in the degree, as he has been described by many.

"I had a sister somewhat older than myself. Had there been any of that sternness in my grandfather which is so falsely imputed to him, it may well be supposed we should have been awed into silence in his presence, to which we were admitted every day. Nothing can be further from the truth; he was the unwearied patron and promoter of all our childish sports and sallies; at all times ready to detach himself from any topic of conversation to take an interest and bear his part in our amusements. The eager curiosity natural to our age, and the questions it gave birth to, so teasing to many parents, he, on the contrary, attended to and encouraged, as the claims of infant reason, never to be evaded or abused;

strongly recommending that to all such inquiries answer should be given according to the strictest truth, and information dealt to us in the clearest terms, as a sacred duty never to be departed from. I have broken in upon him many a time in his hours of study, when he would put his book aside, ring his hand-bell for his servant, and be led to his shelves to take down a book for my amusement. I do not say that his good nature always gained its object, as the pictures which his books generally supplied me with were anatomical drawings of dissected bodies, very little calculated to communicate delight; but he had nothing better to produce, and surely such an effort on his part, however unsuccessful, was no feature of a cynic; a 'cynic should be made of sterner stuff.' I have had from him, at times, while standing at his elbow, a complete and entertaining narrative of his school-boy days, with the characters of his different masters very humorously displayed, and the punishments described which they at times would wrongfully inflict on him for seeming to be idle and regardless of his task, 'When the dunces,' he would say, 'could not discover that I was pondering it in my mind, and fixing it more firmly in my memory, than if I had been bawling it out amongst the rest of my school-fellows.'

"Once, and only once, I recollect his giving me a gentle rebuke for making a most outrageous noise in the room over his library, and disturbing him in his studies; I had no apprehension of anger from him, and confidently answered that I could not help it, as I had been playing at battledore and shuttlecock with Master Gooch, the Bishop of Ely's son. 'And I have been at this sport with his father,' he replied, 'but thine has been the more amusing game; so there's no harm done.'

"His ordinary style of conversation was naturally

lofty, and his frequent use of *thou* and *thee* with his familiars carried with it a kind of dictatorial tone that savoured more of the closet than the court; this is readily admitted, and those first approaches might mislead a stranger; but the native candour and inherent tenderness of his heart could not be long veiled from observation, for his feelings and affections were at once too impulsive to be long repressed, and he too careless of concealment to attempt at qualifying them.

"How liable he was to deviate from the strict line of justice, by his partiality to the side of mercy, appears from the anecdote of the thief who robbed him of his plate, and was seized and brought before him with the very article upon him: the natural process in this man's case pointed out the road to prison; my grandfather's process was more summary, but not quite so legal. While Commissary Greaves, who was then present, and of counsel for the College *ex officio*, was expatiating on the crime, and prescribing the measures obviously to be taken with the offender, Dr Bentley interposed, saying, 'Why tell the man he is a thief? He knows that well enough, without thy information, Greaves. Harkye, fellow, thou see'st the trade which thou hast taken up is an unprofitable trade, therefore get thee gone; lay aside an occupation by which thou can'st gain nothing but a halter, and follow that by which thou may'st earn an honest livelihood.' Having said this he ordered him to be set at liberty against the remonstrances of the bystanders, and insisting upon it that the fellow was penitent for his offence, bade him go his way and never steal again."

In his old age Bentley is recorded to have enjoyed smoking tobacco with his constant companion Dr Walker, a practice which he did not begin before his seventieth year. He is also stated to have been an

admirer of port wine, while of claret, of which he thought contemptuously, he observed that "it would be port if it could." While sitting in his study, he generally wore a hat with an enormous brim, to protect his eyes.

Not long before Bentley's death, he had the satisfaction of knowing that his critical sagacity had achieved a signal triumph. In his "Antiquitates Asiaticæ," Chishull had inserted an inscription taken from an ancient marble. This had been separately copied long before by two travellers, Wheeler and Spon. Chishull printed the eight elegiac lines of which it consisted in a somewhat corrected form, whereupon Bentley wrote a criticism in which he restored them, as he supposed, to what they must have been intended for by the author, thinking the errors to have proceeded from the two travellers by whom they were copied. It was a very bold thing to dispute the separate testimony of two learned eyewitnesses; however, upon the marble being brought to England, every word of the inscription, when examined, turned out to be literally and exactly as Bentley had conjectured it ought to be read.

Bentley's last public appearance was in 1739, on the occasion of the trial of a certain Tinkler Ducket, a fellow of Caius College, who was accused of having imbibed atheistical opinions. Tradition records that, at the trial, Bentley inquired of those about him, "Which was the atheist?" On Ducket being pointed out, who was a thin and meagre personage, he exclaimed, "What! is that the atheist? I expected to have seen a man as big as Burrough the beadle!" Burrough was a personage whose portly appearance did much credit to University cheer.

In his old age Bentley used to compare himself with "an old trunk, which, if you let it alone, will last a long time, but if you jumble it by moving, will soon fall to

pieces." He is recorded to have said that he thought himself likely to live to fourscore, an age long enough to read everything that was worth reading. He appears to have been rather exclusive in his literary tastes, for, once seeing his son reading a novel, he asked him, "What is the use of reading a book you cannot quote?" His prediction that he would live eighty years was fulfilled. He expired on July 14, 1742, and in his person, says Lord Macaulay, the greatest scholar that had appeared in Europe since the revival of letters. His death disproved one at least of the charges with which, when living, he was perpetually assailed—that of avarice. He died possessed of very moderate wealth. Dr Monk doubts whether the savings of his whole life were more than five thousand pounds. He received very little for his works, one hundred guineas for his edition of Milton being believed to be the largest sum he ever got.

Bentley was buried in the Chapel of Trinity College, where a Latin oration was delivered in honour of his memory. His library and papers he bequeathed to his nephew Richard, by whom the more important were given to Trinity College. The remainder of his manuscripts, and a number of his books, with marginal annotations, were afterwards purchased for the British Museum.

Bentley's character has been sufficiently indicated in the foregoing pages. He was emphatically what Dr Johnson liked—a good hater. Endowed in a high degree with the spirit of government, he was never satisfied till he had thoroughly trampled those who opposed him under his feet, and, so long as that end was obtained, he was not over-scrupulous as to the means. But it was only to those who resisted his imperious will that he showed his unamiable qualities, for at heart he was a good-natured man. By his intimate

friends he was looked up to with the most ardent affection, and in his family circle, when the better qualities of his nature got full play, it would be difficult to name any one who was more loved than he. After making all deductions for the faults into which his pride and arrogance led him, there is no reason to doubt that he was throughout life actuated by conscientious motives; firmly convinced that he was in the right, he was persuaded that his opponents were influenced by the most unworthy considerations, and ought to be put down at any hazard. It is easy to see why his contemporaries often judged him so harshly, but now, when his character can be estimated with judicial impartiality, posterity will be inclined to think that his good qualities were considerably in excess of his bad, and that Bentley deserves our admiration, not only as a scholar, but as a man.

As a classical scholar there is no need to dwell on his merits. His unwearied industry, which never for a moment flagged even at the most troublous periods of his life, was united with a certain intuitive sagacity and ingenuity such as perhaps have never been granted to any man. His occasional carelessness, his rage for emendation where no emendation was required, his sometimes too great confidence in his own resources, his boastfulness and arrogance, have all been pointed out often enough. Yet, in spite of these defects, by the universal acknowledgment of all competent to judge, Bentley is the Prince of Scholars. In these days, when so much is said about the superiority of German critics to British, it is surely matter for pride and rejoicing that we have had one scholar, at least, to whom no foreign critic can be mentioned as a superior, or even as an equal. As long as Greek and Latin are studied, so long will the name of Richard Bentley be known and reverenced.

RICHARD PORSON.

RICHARD PORSON.

THE life of Richard Porson is not an edifying one. In great measure it is a record of faults to be shunned rather than of virtues to be imitated; a life full of sad accounts of fine abilities wasted and opportunities thrown away. It would be impossible even for the most adulatory biographer to exalt Porson into a hero; he was of the earth, earthy, and his whole life is overcast by the dark cloud of one overmastering vice. Yet, with great faults, Porson had also great excellences; that he was the first Greek scholar of his time, although his most conspicuous, is by no means his only merit; he was a thoroughly honest and straightforward man, honest not merely in scholarship, but in every relation of life.

Like so many who have risen to great eminence, Porson was of very humble origin. He was born on 25th December 1759 at East Ruston, a little village in Norfolk. His parents were in poor circumstances, his father being a weaver and clerk of the parish, but, although his means were scanty, he was a man considerably above his position intellectually. He is described as having had great sense and a powerful memory; and, being a man of sober and serious character, he brought up his children in habits of frugality and order. Porson's mother, too, was possessed of superior talents. She was fond of poetry, especially of Shakspeare, and one day the vicar of the parish, Mr Hewitt, finding her engaged reading Congreve's "Mourning Bride," gave her free access

to any book in his library. With such parents Porson was more favourably circumstanced as to the attainment of knowledge than many born in more affluent positions. Under his father's tuition he acquired the elements of education, being taught to read and write, and instructed in arithmetic, of which his father was exceedingly fond, as far as the cube root. His mother often employed her children in spinning, and it is related of the subject of this memoir, that he could always produce from a given quantity of wool more yarn, and that of a better quality, than any of his brothers or sisters. All through his life, whatever Porson did, he did thoroughly.

In the ninth year of his age he was sent to a school in a neighbouring parish, taught by a Mr Summers, who instructed him in the elements of Latin. When he first went to school he was one of the worst writers in it; but after three months he became the best, and henceforth caligraphy was a passion with him, everything he wrote being remarkable for the beauty and neatness of its penmanship. What he learned at school his father mprinted firmly on his mind by making him repeat at home in the evening the English lessons he had learned throughout the day; and this not loosely and carelessly, but in the rigorous order in which they had been taught. It is not impossible but that this severe discipline may have considerably strengthened Porson's naturally great powers of memory, for which he was all his life so noted. At this time, like all clever boys, he was exceedingly fond of reading, borrowing from his neighbours when the meagre store of his father's bookshelves was exhausted.

The talents of the lad and his avidity in the pursuit of knowledge, soon began to be talked of in the parish, and reports of him coming to the ears of Mr Hewitt, the

vicar, he very generously offered to take him under his care and give him instruction along with his own sons. This Mr Hewitt appears to have been a man of singular and exemplary character. Upon a very small income he educated five sons for the university, where they all took distinguished positions, and it was reported in the neighbourhood that he had been seen, like another Curius Dentatus, roasting a turnip for supper, and rocking a cradle, and reading a book at the same time. Under this worthy man's tuition Porson remained for three years, advancing in knowledge by rapid steps and earning the warm approval of his patron, who spoke of him in high terms to Mr Norris, a wealthy gentleman residing in a neighbouring parish. Mr Norris expressed his willingness to assist the boy if his abilities should be found at all equal to what Mr Hewitt represented them to be. Throughout his whole career, Porson was singularly fortunate in finding patrons who were both willing and able to assist him. After sundry preliminaries he was sent to Cambridge to undergo an examination by the Greek professor and the senior tutors of Trinity College, an ordeal which might have reasonably frightened a ripe scholar, much more a raw country lad. However, the result was that Porson came off with flying colours, whereupon Mr Norris resolved to raise a fund to which he himself would largely contribute, in order that he might be educated at a first class school and afterwards at the university. The scheme succeeded beyond expectation, and in August 1774, Porson, now fifteen years of age, was sent to Eton.

At Eton Porson's career was fairly successful, but not extraordinarily so. Kidd says, that when he entered Eton he was "totally ignorant of quantity," and that, "after he had toiled up the arduous path to literary

eminence, he was often twitted by his quondam schoolfellows with those violations of quantity which are common in first attempts at Latin verse." He continued to be as fond of reading as ever, and the remarkable tenacity of his memory soon became especially noticeable. Of this he one day gave an extraordinary instance. He was going up with the rest of his form to say a lesson in Horace, and not being able to find his book at the time, took one which was thrust into his hand by another boy. He was called on to construe, and went on with great accuracy, but the master observed that he did not appear to be looking on that part of the page on which the lesson was. He therefore took the book from his hand, and found it to be an English translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Porson was desired to continue the construing, which he did without erring in a single word. On the whole, however, while at Eton Porson seems to have distinguished himself quite as much by his powers for promoting fun out of the school as by his abilities in the classes. He wrote an operatic drama, "Out of the Fryingpan into the Fire," of considerable smartness and vigour, and assailed such of his schoolfellows as had made themselves obnoxious to him by pungent epigrams and sarcasms, weapons to which he always resorted in time of difficulty. On his Eton life Porson used to dwell with peculiar complacency, repeating his juvenile compositions with a zest which the recollection of his past enjoyment never failed to revive in him. When he had been there about three years his patron, Mr Norris, died, and it is supposed that the suddenness of his death prevented him from making any provision in favour of his young *protegé*. However, Sir George Baker, who had been one of the principal contributors to the first subscription for Porson, undertook to

collect subscriptions for the purpose of sending him to the University, and secured enough to purchase him an annuity of £80 for a few years. So after having been at Eton four years, Porson, in 1778, entered Trinity College, Cambridge. The perusal of a copy of Toup's "Longinus," which the head master of Eton presented to him as the reward of a good exercise, first inclined his mind to those critical researches in which he afterwards gained such celebrity.

The fame of Porson's talents had gone before him to Cambridge, where he was welcomed as an alumnus likely to do the University credit. Of his under-graduate life little is known save that he conducted himself with correctness, and inspired the scholars of the university with a strong belief of his powers to distinguish himself in classical pursuits. In 1781 he gained the Craven Scholarship, one of the highest university distinctions for classics, and he appears also to have devoted considerable attention to mathematics, a fondness for which he inherited from his father, and which he retained to the end of his life. In 1782 he took his degree as third senior optime, the number of the wranglers being eighteen, and shortly afterwards obtained the first Chancellor's Medal, thus winning the highest place in classics, together with a respectable rank in mathematics. In the same year he was elected to a fellowship, a rule which should properly have excluded him being waived on account of his eminent abilities. The emoluments from his fellowship did not exceed £100 per annum, a sum which, although the value of money is greatly altered since then, must nevertheless be considered very small. The fellowship was held under the obligation of resigning it at the end of ten years unless he entered into orders.

The first essay of Porson in the field of classical

criticism was in a journal called *Maty's Review*, at that time published at Cambridge. In this periodical he wrote, in 1783, a brief paper on Schutz's edition of "Aeschylus," which was followed by several other articles of greater importance, including a review of Brunck's "Aristophanes," in which several acute emendations of the text were suggested. About this time also he commenced his correspondence with foreign professors of celebrity, which afterwards became extensive—extensive, at least, on the side of the foreign professors, for Porson was always an exceedingly bad correspondent—by writing to Professor Ruhnken on the subject of an edition of "Aeschylus," which he contemplated publishing. His letter to Ruhnken contained a few conjectural emendations of corrupt passages, which called forth the veteran scholar's warmest commendations. To an edition of Xenophon's "Anabasis," published at Cambridge, he added a few notes of no very great importance. But a *jeu d'esprit* he printed in 1787 in the *Gentleman's Magazine* upon that absurd book, "Hawkins' Life of Johnson," is of more general interest than any of these minor classical productions. Perhaps its most amusing passage is the following burlesque imitation of Hawkins' style, the humour of which will readily be apprehended even by those who have never seen Hawkins' book. To aid its comprehension it may be stated that Hawkins gives a description of a watch which Johnson bought for seventeen guineas. Porson affects to find the history of this watch broken off abruptly, and to have accidentally picked up a leaf which had originally filled up the chasm:—

FRAGMENT.

. . . . "And here, touching this watch, already by me mentioned, I insert a notable instance of the craft and

selfishness of the doctor's negro servant. A few days after that whereon Dr Johnson died, this artful fellow came to me and surrendered the watch, saying, at the same time, that his master had delivered it to him a day or two before his demise, with such demeanour and gestures that he did verily believe that it was his intention that he, namely Frank, should keep the same. Myself knowing that no sort of credit was due to a black domestic and favourite servant, and withal considering that the wearing thereof would be more proper for myself, and that I had got nothing by my trust as executor save sundry old books, and coach hire for journeys during the discharge of the said office; and, further, reflecting on what I have occasion elsewhere to mention, viz.—that since the abolishing of general warrants, *temp.* Geo. III., no good articles in this branch can be had any longer in England,—I took the watch from him, intending to have it appraised by my own jeweller, a very honest and expert artificer, and in so doing to have bought it as cheap as I could for myself, let it cost what it would. Upon signifying this, my intention, to Frank, the impudent negro said, 'he plainly saw there was no good intended for him,' and in anger left me. He then posted to the other executors; and there being in the people of this country a general propensity to humanity, notwithstanding all my exertions to counteract the same both in writing and otherwise, this being the case, I say, he had found means to prepossess them so entirely in his favour, that they snubbed me, and insisted that I should make restitution. Finally, though perhaps I should not have been amenable to any known judicature by keeping the watch, I consented, being compelled thereto, to let this worthless fellow retain that testimony of his master's ill-directed benevolence *in extremis*."

As already mentioned, Porson's fellowship fell vacant at the end of ten years unless he entered into Orders. Accordingly he determined to enter into a course of theological reading, in order to ascertain whether he could conscientiously sign the Articles or not. The result was that he made up his mind that he could not sign them. "I found," he said, "that I should require about fifty years reading to make myself thoroughly acquainted with divinity—to satisfy my mind on all points, and therefore I gave it up. There are fellows who go into the pulpit assuming everything and knowing nothing, but I would not do so." For Porson to give up his fellowship in the circumstances he did, seems to us a singularly magnanimous act. It was his sole means of livelihood; where else to look for a living he knew not. If he had entered the Church, these were the golden days of Greek scholarship, when to have edited a Greek play was a safe stepping-stone to a deanery or even a bishopric; what Gibbon called the "fat slumbers of the Church" offered him a secure and comfortable haven where he might have passed his life enjoying *otium cum dignitate* to the fullest extent. But Porson preferred poverty and honesty to wealth and hypocrisy, and, though his life was stained by many a blot, let us by no means refuse him the praise due to this noble and manly resolution. When such a man as Paley could declare without reproach that "he was too poor to keep a conscience," the virtue of the poor Cambridge scholar seems to shine with redoubled lustre.

Among the books Porson met with in the course of his theological reading was "Travis' Letters to Gibbon on 1 John v. 7," the famous "Three witnesses" text. In a note to the third volume of his history Gibbon had observed that "the three witnesses have been established

in our Greek Testament by the prudence of Erasmus, the honest bigotry of the Complutensian editors, the typographical fraud or error of Robert Stephens in the placing of a crotchet, and the deliberate falsehood or strange misrepresentation of Theodore Beza." Travis endeavoured with considerable ingenuity, but little scholarship, to prove the genuineness of the verse in question. Porson examined the subject with his customary accuracy and care, and coming to the conclusion that Travis was a presumptuous meddler, in order to refute him wrote a series of letters to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which were afterwards republished in book form. "I had read," he says, "though without examining every minute particle of their reasoning, Mill, Wetsein, and Newton, and I was fully satisfied of the spuriousness of the verse from my general recollection of their arguments. But I must thus far confess my obligations to Mr Travis, that the appearance of his book induced me to reconsider the subject with a little more attention. In the course of this enquiry I found such astonishing instances of error, such intrepid assertions contrary to fact, that I almost doubted whether I were awake while I read them. But at last I discovered that Mr Travis was a stranger to all criticism, sacred and profane; and that he had read scarcely anything on the subject of the contested verse, except Martin's publications. This discovery opened my eyes, and made me see why Mr Travis was, as Professor Michaelis rightly says, half a century behindhand in his information." The full history of this famous controversy cannot be given here. It is sufficient to say that, according to the almost universal opinion of scholars, both then and since, Porson gained a complete victory, and utterly demolished the unfortunate Travis. "Travis," writes Parr, "was a super-

ficial and arrogant declaimer; and his letter to Gibbon brought down upon him the just and heavy displeasure of an assailant equally irresistible for his wit, his reasoning, and his erudition—I mean the immortal Richard Porson." Travis is treated with the utmost contempt, the letters being couched in a vein of vehement scorn and irony, another of the many proofs that the study of classical literature by no means always softens the manners, and sometimes allows its followers to be very fierce indeed. The literary success of the "Letters to Travis" was the occasion of a great pecuniary loss to Porson. A Mrs Turner, who had been one of the most liberal contributors to the fund for sending him to college, being a lady of pious disposition, was much distressed when she heard that he had resolved to resign his fellowship rather than take orders. Her attorney, who had a grudge against Porson, represented the "Letters to Travis," to her as a fierce assault upon Christianity, and as intended to strike at the root of all evangelical religion. By these calumnies she was induced to alter her will, in which she had assigned to Porson a large sum of money, and to bequeath him only a legacy of £30.

In 1790 there was published at Oxford a reprint of Toup's *Emendationes in Suidam*, containing some short annotations by Porson. The preface to these is eminently characteristic. He claims the indulgence of the reader for blaming a man of Toup's eminence oftener than praising him. He had never, he says, admired the practice of those critics who exclaim *pulchre*, *bene*, *recte*, at every second or third word; adding that if he had not had a high opinion of Toup's abilities he would never have thought it worth while to edit his work. To the ceremonies and compliments of scholarship, Porson was *always* averse.

The winter of 1790-1 Porson spent with Dr Parr at Hatton, collecting materials for future works, and enriching his mind with the stores of Parr's library. His manner of life there has been described by Parr's biographer, Dr Johnstone. He rose late, and seldom walked out, sitting in the library till dinner, reading or taking notes in his exquisitely neat hand. Except to Parr, whom he often consulted on the subject of his studies, he seldom spoke a word in the morning, his manner then being sullen, and his countenance gloomy. After dinner his gravity relaxed a little; but it was only at night, and when he would collect the young men of the family about him, that he appeared in his glory, and displayed his really great powers of conversation. Dr Johnstone speaks rapturously of the delights of his society at the midnight hour, when he would astonish and delight his audience with apt quotations and satirical remarks, repeating pages of Barrow, whole letters of Richardson, whole scenes of Foote. It may easily be supposed that these orgies were more delightful to those who participated in them than to the mistress of the house. A guest who was like a melancholy spectre all day, and a noisy reveller all night, cannot have been an agreeable one, and Mrs Parr, whose temper was none of the best, was soon heartily tired of Porson. In order to get rid of him, she purposely so insulted him, that it was impossible he could any longer remain under her roof. For Porson, Parr himself always entertained sentiments of the greatest friendship and veneration.

The time during which Porson could hold his fellowship had now expired, and what was he to do? Dr Postlethwaite, the Master of Trinity College, good, easy-minded man, earnestly counselled him to take orders, and not relinquish the pleasant shelter offered by so&

academic shades. The following conversation tool place between them shortly before the fellowship fel vacant:—

Porson. "I am come, Sir, to inform you that my fellowship will become vacant in a few weeks, in orde that you may appoint my successor."

Postlethwaite. "But, Mr Porson, you do not mean tc leave us?"

Porson. "It is not I who leave you, but you who dis miss me. You have done me every injury in you power. But I am not come to explain or expostulate."

Postlethwaite. "I did not know, Mr Porson, that yo were so resolved."

Porson. "You could not conceive, Sir, that I should have applied for a lay fellowship to the detriment of some more scrupulous man, if it had been my intention to take orders."

Porson's grievance against Postlethwaite was that he had used his influence to prevent him from being elected to a lay fellowship, which he wished to secure for John Heys, his nephew. It is related that on the evening of the day on which his fellowship expired, Porson expressed great anguish, and even shed tears when he reflected on the gloom of his prospects.

His prospects certainly were gloomy enough. On leaving Cambridge he went to London, where, to use his own words, "he found himself a gentleman without a sixpence in his pocket." There he lived for six weeks on a guinea, taking only two slight meals in the twenty-four hours. Like a much greater man, Samuel Johnson, Porson appears to have borne the ills of poverty with a calm stoicism which is much oftener admired than imitated. Poverty of such severity, however, he was not destined to endure long. A number of scholars and

literary men started a subscription to purchase an annuity for him. Funds to the amount of £2000 were soon collected, most of the leading scholars of the day being contributors. The interest of this sum amounted to about £100 a year, which Porson consented to accept only upon condition that the principal should be placed in the hands of trustees to be returned to the contributors at his death.

Soon after Porson resigned his fellowship in 1792, the professorship of Greek at Cambridge became vacant. No man living was more qualified by eminent scholarship to adorn this chair than Porson. As his high qualifications were universally recognised, Dr Postlethwaite, as if to make some amends for his previous conduct, wrote to Porson asking him to offer himself as a candidate for the office. Porson's objections to take orders resting not merely on his unfitness to undertake clerical duties, but on conscientious difficulties with regard to the signing of the Articles, he feared that subscription to them might be necessary, and so prove a bar to his accepting the office. Part of the letter he wrote to Postlethwaite on this occasion is worth quoting. Its undertone of sarcasm shows the bitter feeling with which he regarded his exclusion from Cambridge. "The same reasons," he says, "which hindered me from keeping my fellowship by the method you obligingly pointed out to me, would, I am greatly afraid, prevent me from being Greek professor. Whatever concern this may give me for myself, it gives me none for the public. I trust there are at least twenty or thirty in the university equally able and willing to undertake the office; possessed, many, of talents superior to mine, and all of a more complying conscience. This I speak upon the supposition that the next Greek professor will be compelled to read lectures;

but if the place remains a sinecure, the number of qualified persons will be greatly increased. And though it were even granted that my industry and attention might possibly produce some benefit to the interests of learning and the credit of the university, that trifling gain would be as much exceeded by keeping the professorship a sinecure, and bestowing it upon a sound believer, as temporal considerations are outweighed by spiritual. Having only a strong persuasion, not an absolute certainty, that such a subscription is required of the professor elect, if I am mistaken I hereby offer myself as a candidate; but, if I am right in my opinion, I shall beg of you to order my name to be erased from the boards." Postlethwaite immediately replied that no subscription was necessary, and that a day had been appointed for his examination, *if any one had the courage to attempt it.* Porson thereupon offered himself as a candidate, and was elected unanimously.

The salary attached to the office was only £40 per annum, but the dignity was considerable. Porson entered upon his new duties with a good deal of enthusiasm, resuming his studies and planning courses of lectures. "Porson," wrote Burney to Parr, "is in much better health than he has been for several months. His fancy, memory, taste, and philological powers are in as high vigour as ever; though in a conversation lately, upon the subject of the Greek professorship, he complained of the difficulty of recalling the mind to a pursuit from which it has been torn, and how hard a task it was, when a man's spirit had once been broken, to renovate it." Either because rooms were not afforded him in which to deliver his lectures, or because he was incorrigibly indolent, the lecture scheme came to nothing, although the delivery of lectures would have increased

his income considerably. Henceforth he seems to have resided principally in London, where he was appointed to superintend an edition of Heyne's "Virgil," then being printed at the London press. It reflects but little credit on his editorial care if it be true, as is said, that it contains nine hundred errors which common attention on his part would have rendered impossible. The blame, on Porson's declaration, lay wholly with the booksellers, who, he said, paid no attention to his corrections. However this may be, Porson was qualified for higher things than a mere corrector of the press, and doubtless the commonplace drudgery his duties involved was eminently distasteful to him.

In 1795 there was printed, at the famous Foulis press in Glasgow, a magnificent folio edition of "Æschylus," said to contain eight hundred corrections by Porson. According to a note in the "Pursuits of Literature," it originated thus:—Mr Porson, the Greek professor at Cambridge, lent his manuscript corrections and conjectures on the text of "Æschylus" to a friend in Scotland; for he once had an intention of publishing an edition of that tragedian. His corrected text fell into the hands of the Scotch printer, Foulis, and, without the Professor's leave, or even knowledge, he published a magnificent edition of "Æschylus" from it without notes. Though never openly acknowledged by Porson, the edition is said to bear indubitable marks of his hand.

Hitherto we have said nothing about Porson's one notorious vice—his gross addiction to intemperance. But it is impossible to write his biography without alluding to this unsavoury subject. Most people's knowledge of Porson is confined to the two facts, that he was a great scholar and a great drinker. Of a great many anecdotes which have accumulated round his name, a considerable

number relate more or less to his indulgence in drink. He lived in a hard-drinking age, in an age when such men as Pitt and Dundas were not ashamed to go drunk to the House of Commons, yet even then his gross intemperance was noted and censured. Willingly would we pass over this topic, but it cannot be done—to use the stale comparison, to act Hamlet with the part of the melancholy Dane omitted, would be as feasible as to write about Porson without mentioning his drinking habits.

It is probable that it was while an undergraduate at Cambridge that he first gave way to that appetite for drink which was the bane of his subsequent life. The ambition to be "King of the company," always apt to be a besetting sin in men of talent, seems to have been one great source of temptation to him. In society he was always shy and constrained, "till the opening of the second bottle." He used to say, that the highest compliment he ever received was that of some drinking companion at the Cider Cellars. "Dick," said this tavern Bardolph, "can beat us all; he can drink all night and spout all day." The blackest account of Porson's intemperance is given in a letter of Byron to Murray, written in 1818. It runs as follows:—"I remember to have seen Porson at Cambridge in the hall of our college, and in private parties; and I can never recollect him except as drunk, or brutal, and generally both—I mean in an evening; for in the hall he dined at the Dean's table, and I at the vice-master's, and he then and there appeared sober in his demeanour; but I have seen him in a private party of undergraduates take up a poker to them, and heard him use language as blackguard as his actions. Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky, abusive, and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial, as far as the

few times I saw him went. He was tolerated in this state among the young men for his talent; as the Turks think a madman inspired, and bear with him. He used to recite, or rather vomit, pages of all languages, and could hiccup Greek like a Helot; and certainly Sparta never shocked her children with a grosser exhibition than this man's intoxication." It is impossible not to believe that there is only too much truth in this. Nevertheless, it should be held in mind, that Byron's judgments in his letters upon men, books, and things, are to be received with considerable caution and reserve. They always give one the impression of having been written with a view to effect, and the misanthropic spirit of the noble bard led him to scan human frailty with a far from lenient eye.

As was natural, Porson's habits of dissipation changed his appearance greatly for the worse. Originally he had been a remarkably handsome man, of nearly six feet in height, distinguished for expressive and penetrating eyes, well-formed features, and a clear open forehead. In a few years, however, his face and figure became even repulsively degraded. His nose was so swollen and red as to require constant application of brown paper steeped in vinegar. Though as little attentive to personal appearance as any man, he was sometimes compelled to decline invitations to dinner, on the ground that his face would not bear the inspection of strangers. His clothes and linen had such a disreputable appearance, that servants were unwilling to admit him into their master's houses. Sir Joseph Banks once invited him to dine with him at an hotel in London. He waited patiently for the distinguished Greek scholar, but he never made his appearance. Upon meeting him afterwards, and inquiring the reason of his absence, Porson simply replied that he

"*had* come." Banks's conjecture was, that the waiters, seeing his shabby dress, had refused him admittance. The following anecdote Porson himself used to delight to relate. Calling one day on one of the judges with whom he was intimate, he was shown into a room where a gentleman who did not know him was waiting for the barber. Seeing before him a seedy-looking man, ill-dressed, and with a patch of brown paper on his inflamed nose, the gentleman, starting up, said to him, "Are you the barber?" "No," replied Porson, "but I am a cunning shaver, very much at your service." Maltby relates having seen him one morning at Leigh and Sotheby's auction room, even dirtier than usual, "looking as if he had been rolling in a kennel." Being once at a ball in the assembly rooms at Bath, the master of the ceremonies went up to Mr Warner, the gentleman who accompanied him, and said, "Pray, Mr Warner, who is that man you have been speaking to? I can't say I much like his appearance." "To tell the truth," adds Warner, "Porson, with lank, uncombed locks, a loose neckcloth, and wrinkled stockings, exhibited a striking contrast to the gorgeous crowd around." From all these anecdotes we may gather pretty conclusively that if Porson had been judged only by his appearance, he would have been emphatically "cut" by all respectable society.

The quantity of alcoholic fluid he could imbibe was something portentous and unexampled. Mrs Parr complained that during three weeks he was at Hatton more brandy had been consumed than during all the time of their housekeeping there. One Sunday morning when at Eton, Porson met Dr Goodal, the provost, going to church, and asked him where Mrs Goodal was. Being answered that she was at breakfast, he said he would go and breakfast with her. He accordingly went, and being

asked what he would take, answered "Porter." Porter was sent for, pot after pot, and the sixth pot was just being brought up when Dr Goodal returned from church. Not only was the quantity Porson could drink extraordinary, being a bad sleeper, he could sit up drinking night after night, apparently not in the least exhausted by his potations. This practice was a source of great annoyance to his friends, who could scarcely induce him to retire at a decent hour. Horne Tooke, knowing his habit, on one occasion contrived to find out the opportunity of requesting his company when he knew he had been sitting up the whole of the night before. However, this made no difference. Porson sat up the second night also till the hour of sunrise. The more regular of his friends were at length compelled to fix an hour on which he should take his departure. Eleven o'clock was generally the stipulated time, and Porson invariably remained till the very last moment. Once, when the lady of the house gave him a gentle hint that she wished him to retire a little earlier, he observed, with some asperity, that it wanted a quarter of an hour of eleven.

Porson, latterly at anyrate, would seem to have been a dipsomaniac, his craving for drink having developed itself into a disease. Rogers relates that he would not scruple to return to the dining-room after the company had left, pour into a tumbler the drops remaining in the wine-glasses, and drink off the mixture. "Rather than not drink at all," said Horne Tooke, "Porson would drink ink." Maltby relates that Porson, being one day sitting with a gentleman in the house of a mutual friend, who was then ill and confined to bed, a servant came into the room for a bottle of embrocation which had been left there. "I drank it an hour ago," said Porson. Another anecdote of the same sort runs as follows:—

"When Hoppner the painter was residing in a cottage a few miles from London, Porson, one afternoon, unexpectedly arrived there. Hoppner said that he could not offer him dinner, as Mrs Hoppner had gone to town, and had carried with her the key of the closet which contained the wine. Porson, however, declared he would be content with a mutton chop and beer from the next ale-house, and accordingly stayed to dine. During the evening Porson said, 'I am quite sure that Mrs Hoppner keeps some nice bottle for her private drinking in her own bed-room; so pray try if you can lay your hands on it.' His host assured him that Mrs Hoppner had no such secret store; but Porson insisting that a search should be made, a bottle was at last discovered in the lady's apartment to the surprise of Hoppner, and the joy of Porson, who soon finished its contents, pronouncing it to be the best gin he had tasted for a long time. Next day Hoppner, somewhat out of temper, informed his wife that Porson had drunk every drop of it. 'Drunk every drop of it!' cried she; 'my God, it was spirits of wine for the lamp!'" There is an apocryphal air about this anecdote; however, we give it as we find it. The fact that Porson could, when he chose, observe total abstinence for a considerable time from wine and spirituous liquors, seems to militate a little against the dipsomania theory, which the foregoing anecdote appears to go to prove to be a correct one. Perhaps, after all, *dipsomania* is little else than a fine name for a confirmed habit of intemperance. In regard to his eating, as to the quality of his food he was easily satisfied, as the following anecdote shows:—"He went once to the Bodleian to collate a manuscript; and, as the work would occupy him several days, Routh, the President of Magdalen, who was leaving home for the long vacation, said to him at his departure,

'Make my house your home, Mr Porson, during my absence; for my servants will have orders to be quite at your command, and to procure you whatever you please.' When he returned, he asked for the account of what the Professor had had during his stay. The servant brought the bill, and the Doctor, glancing at it, observed a fowl entered in it every day. 'What!' said he, 'did you provide for Mr Porson no better than this, but oblige him to dine every day on fowl?' 'No, sir,' replied the servant; 'but we asked the gentleman the first day what he would have for dinner, and as he did not seem to know very well what to order, we suggested a fowl. When we went to him about dinner every day afterwards, he always said, "The same as yesterday," and this was the only answer we could get from him.'"

Porson's copious potations do not appear to have injured his mental powers to any great extent even to the very last, but they materially injured his power of application. The London booksellers once offered him £3000 for an edition of Aristophanes, a task for which he was pre-eminently qualified, and which he could easily have completed in six months; but his inveterate idleness led him to neglect the offer. "When Pitt was in power," says Macaulay, alluding to Pitt's scanty patronage of literature, "the greatest philologist of the age, his own contemporary at Cambridge, was reduced to earn a livelihood by the lowest literary drudgery, and to spend, in writing squibs for the *Morning Chronicle*, years to which we might have owed an almost perfect text of the whole tragic and comic drama of Athens." This is one of Macaulay's many over-charged statements. When he wrote it he was surely oblivious of the offer of £3000. At the time Porson was writing for the *Morn-*

ing Chronicle he was not at all exposed to the pressure of pecuniary difficulty.

Quitting these disagreeable themes, we resume our narrative at the point where we left off. The next notable event in Porson's life was his marriage. He had been for some time acquainted with Mr Perry, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, to which he became a frequent contributor. In November 1795 he married Mrs Lunan, Perry's sister. The circumstances attending the marriage were very characteristic of the man. One night while smoking his pipe with a friend, George Gordon, at the Cider Cellars, he suddenly said, "Friend Gordon, do you not think the widow Lunan an agreeable sort of person, as times go?" Gordon replied in the affirmative. "In that case," said Porson, "you must meet me to-morrow morning at St Martin's-in-the-Fields at eight o'clock." He then paid his reckoning and departed. Gordon was astonished, but repaired next morning to church at the appointed hour, and found Porson with Mrs Lunan and a female friend, and the clergyman waiting to perform the ceremony. Gordon found, on inquiry, that it was some time since Porson had proposed to Mrs Lunan, but that the lady, as Porson wished the ceremony to be performed without her brother's knowledge, had been unwilling to listen, and had only given her consent on finding that she must either yield to Porson's wishes on this point, or reject him altogether. Now that the marriage was completed, Gordon urged Porson to allow Mr Perry to be informed of it, to which Porson at length agreed, saying, "Friend George, I shall for once take advice, which, as you know, I seldom do, and hold out the olive-branch, provided you will accompany me; for you are a good peace-maker." Gordon agreed, and though Perry was at first somewhat hurt by

the secrecy, they found means to reconcile him; whereupon a dinner was provided, and an apartment prepared for the newly-married couple. Immediately after dinner Porson adjourned to the house of a friend, where he sat without making the slightest allusion to the change in his condition, and without attempting to stir till the hour prescribed by the family obliged him to depart. On leaving his friend's house he went to the Cider Cellars, where he stayed till eight next morning.

The marriage, thus inauspiciously begun, turned out a much happier one than might have been expected. Mrs Porson was an amiable and good-natured woman, and, says Colonel Gordon, "the Professor treated her with all the kindness of which he was capable." During the period of Porson's married life a great change for the better came over his habits. He became more attentive to time and seasons, and there even appeared a hope that he might be won, by the domestic comfort by which his wife surrounded him, from his practice of excessive tippling. Unfortunately, however, all such expectations were blasted by the death of his wife, which took place a year and a half after the marriage.

That Porson had not been a bad husband appears from the fact that Perry, his brother-in-law, always continued his steadfast friend. While on a visit to him at Merton, a fire took place in Porson's house which utterly destroyed the labour of eight months. He had undertaken to transcribe the Greek "Lexicon of Photius," having borrowed the manuscript from Trinity College, Cambridge. He had just completed the task, when, on the morning of the day the fire broke out, he went to visit Perry, fortunately taking with him the original manuscript. The fire totally destroyed the transcript. On Dr Raine informing him of his loss, Porson first in-

quired if any lives had been lost. On being answered in the negative, he exclaimed, "Then I will tell you what I have lost—twenty years of my life!" at the same time repeating the stanza of Gray:—

> "'To each his sufferings—all are men
> Condemned alike to groan;
> The tender for another's pain,
> The unfeeling for his own.'"

However, Porson at length reconciled himself to his loss, and sat down to make a second transcript of Photius, as accurate as the first. This labour was not so irksome to him as it would have been to many. He delighted in penmanship, and wrote the Greek characters with singular beauty.

Writing squibs for the *Morning Chronicle* appears to have been one of Porson's most favourite occupations. In 1796 he published in it Greek and Latin versions of the nursery song, "Three Children sliding on the Ice," with a satirical letter, stating that the Greek version was a portion of one of the lost tragedies of Sophocles, which he had been so fortunate as to find at the bottom of an old trunk. The letter was signed Sam. England, and was intended as a satire on the numerous men of eminence who had been duped by Ireland's pretended Shakspearian discoveries, which Porson had all along considered a wretched imposture.

In 1797 appeared anonymously the work which conclusively proved Porson to be the first Greek scholar in Europe—his edition of the "Hecuba." It was a small duodecimo volume, with a short preface, in which he modestly announced that nothing recondite or of deep research was to be expected in the notes, as the edition was intended for tiros. This edition involved Porson in *two* literary quarrels. Gilbert Wakefield, a man of per-

haps considerable scholarship, but with a sad lack of sound judgment and common sense, had before published an edition of the "Hecuba," with some emendations, of none of which had Porson deigned to take the slightest notice. Wakefield, who was an extremely vain man, was exceedingly nettled at this, the more so because he had some slight acquaintance with Porson. He hastened in great agitation to the shop of Evans the publisher, and asked him who the editor was. On being answered, "Mr Porson, of course," Wakefield replied, "But I want proof, positive proof." "Well, then," said Evans, "I saw Mr Porson present a large paper copy to Mr Cracherode, and heard him acknowledge himself the editor." Wakefield accordingly hastened home and wrote his "Diatribe Extemporalis," which may still be read with amusement by the classical scholar, on account of its insane passages of ridiculous rage. He angrily asks whether it is fair for a man who had always been treated by himself as a friend, to write on the same subjects as himself, and having such a favourable opportunity of commending him not to do so. Porson, on receiving a copy of Wakefield's performance, observed that it was as unskilful as it was rash, and that a couple of columns in a morning paper would be sufficient to show its want of solidity. He added, "I hope we shall not meet, for a violent quarrel would be the consequence." In connection with this squabble, an amusing anecdote is told. Porson, on the evening of the publication of the "Diatribe," was at a club to which he belonged, consisting of seven members and a president; when, in the course of the evening, the president proposed that each of the members should toast a friend, accompanying his name with a suitable quotation. When it came to him, Porson, whose potations had been pretty

deep, exclaimed, "It is my turn—Gilbert Wakefield." "Good, Mr Porson," said the president, "but not enough: quote, if you please, as well as name; our law, like that of the Medes and Persians, altereth not." "What's Hic, hic, huc, Hecuba to him, or he to Hic, hic, huc Hecuba," roared the indignant professor. Wakefield was not an antagonist worthy of Porson's steel, and the way he took his revenge was characteristic. In his after works he scarcely deigned to mention him by name, but alluded in passing to some of his emendations and remarks, which he treats with the most edifying contempt.

Porson's other quarrel was with a man of far greater powers than Wakefield, Gottfried Hermann, one of the leading continental critics. Ignorant of Porson's full strength, and perceiving that in his preface to the "Hecuba" he had made several assertions unsupported by much proof, he resolved to put forth a rival edition and preface, in which he adopted to Porson the attitude of a superior towards an inferior. In his preface he observes that Porson "was said to have made many observations on the subject of metres; a subject which it was the more desirable to illustrate, as the text of Euripides, in this respect especially, is somewhat more difficult of emendation than that of the other tragic writers; but though some remarks, indeed, on this department of classical learning have been offered by Porson, yet he has chosen to state them arbitrarily and oracularly, rather than with the fulness of explanation which it is the duty of a critic to give." Porson paid Hermann the compliment of being deeply incensed at him, and regarded him ever after as a personal enemy. He used to allude to him and Wakefield together as four-footed animals, and to say that what he wrote in future should be written in such a manner that they should not reach it

with their paws though they stood on their hind legs to get at it. Hermann's animadversions drew forth from Porson a Supplement to the preface to his "Hecuba," in which he amply vindicated the opinions he had before advanced. Hermann is not mentioned in the Supplement; but as almost every line contains some allusion to the blunders he had committed, it must have caused him to feel keenly how presumptuous he had been in attacking so great a scholar as Porson. Quarrels between scholars are apt to remind people in general of a tempest in a teapot, the acrimony of the language and the smallness of the interests involved appearing so painfully discrepant. As the greater part of this controversy relates to subtleties about Greek metres, and such like points, it is utterly impossible to give the general reader any account of it.

The year after the publication of the "Hecuba," Porson published his edition of the "Orestes," edited upon the same principles and with equal learning. His contributions to the *Morning Chronicle* still continued numerous. In the "Pursuits of Literature" he is charged with giving up to Perry what was meant for mankind, and is exhorted to write no more in Mr Perry's little democratic closet, fitted up for the wits at the *Morning Chronicle* office. "It is beneath you," says the author. "I write seriously; I know your abilities. It may do well enough for Joseph Richardson, Esq., author of the comedy of the 'Fugitives,' if a certain political dramatist's compositions leave him any abilities at all, which I begin to doubt." A good many of Porson's lucubrations are reproduced in Mr Watson's biography, but they do not possess any very great merit. Indeed, they are principally remarkable as showing with what poor literary matter editors were then content to fill their columns

and think clever writing. The best of Porson's productions in this line are his epigrams, for writing which he had considerable talents. One night, when Perry came back from the House of Commons with a story that Pitt and Dundas were too drunk to speak, Porson, being vastly amused, called for his pipe and tankard, and knocked off one hundred and one epigrams before the day dawned. As might be expected they are of no very great merit. The following are the best specimens :—

" When Billy found he scarce could stand,
'Help, help !' he cried, and stretched his hand
To faithful Henry calling ;
Quoth Hal, 'My friend, I'm sorry for't,
'Tis not my practice to support
A minister that's falling.'

'Who's up ?' inquired Burke of a friend at the door.
'Oh ! no one,' says Paddy ; though Pitt's *on the floor.*

Your foes in war to overrate
A maxim is of ancient date ;
Then sure 'twas right in time of trouble
That our good rulers should see double.

Your gentle brains with full libations drench,
You've *then* Pitt's title to the Treasury Bench."

Much of Porson's time, however, was employed to better purpose than the writing of mediocre epigrams. In 1799 appeared his edition of the "Phœnissæ," in the notes to which he abstained from making any reference to Hermann or Wakefield, with the exception of one slight allusion to Wakefield. Besides editing "Euripides," he collated the Harleian manuscript of the "Odyssey" for the Grenville edition of Homer, then being published at Oxford. To this work he devoted himself with more

than ordinary diligence, shutting himself up for two or three days together, and being quite inaccessible save to his intimate friends. "One morning," says Maltby, "I went to call upon him there [at Essex Court]; and having inquired at his barber's close by if Mr Porson was at home, was answered, 'Yes, but he has seen no one for two days.' I, however, proceeded to his chamber, and knocked more than once. He would not open it, and I came downstairs. As I was recrossing the court, Porson, who had perceived that I was the visitor, opened the window, and stopped me." His remuneration for this labour was £50 and a large paper copy of the edition. Porson was a most accurate and painstaking collator. A reader of Greek manuscript must be a scribe himself, and a great deal of the facility with which Porson performed his collations is to be attributed to his practice as a caligrapher. A few critical remarks are scattered through the collation, the conclusion of which runs as follows:—"Thus I have at last, I hope, left no important error in this collation; that there are no omissions I will not venture to assert. If any one, however, shall take upon himself to supply my deficiencies, and to correct, at the same time, such mistakes as I have committed, let him be assured that he will do what is acceptable to the republic of letters as well as to myself. Whether he do it tenderly or harshly will have no effect on me, if he but do it accurately; but it may possibly have a good effect on himself, if he be anxious to show that he undertook the task rather to be of service to the republic of letters than to depress a rival."

In 1801 appeared at Cambridge an edition of the "Medea," edited by Porson, the last of his critical labours on Euripides. Why he did not go on with the remaining plays seems capable of no satisfactory explana-

tion, except that in his habits he was rapidly proceeding from bad to worse. Porson's editions of these four plays of Euripides—"Hecuba," "Orestes," "Phœnissæ," and "Medea," have been often reprinted, and it is mainly upon them that his fame as a Greek scholar rests. What he did for Greek scholarship has been thus described by a competent authority* :—"We must ask our readers to take for granted what we have not space to prove by example—that Porson attained, in a measure beyond his contemporaries, 'the vision and faculty divine' of comprehending the very soul and substance of the Greek language. Bentley possessed in an equal degree the power of deciphering manuscripts and detecting the errors of copyists and editors. But the far wider round and compass of his reading caused him to pay less particular attention to the laws of Greek metre, and this, accordingly, came nearly a virgin province into Porson's hands. How complete a discovery was his 'Metrical Canons,' contained in his Preface and Supplement to the four plays edited by him, may be seen by any one who takes the trouble to compare Hermann's first edition of the 'Elementa Doctrinæ Metricæ' with the later one of that work, or the text of any edition of Euripides earlier than Porson's first 'Hecuba.' To compare great things with less, the light thrown upon the order and operations of the solar system by Copernicus and Newton was not more intense than the light thrown upon the three principal measures of the Greek dramatic poets by Porson. Next in order, though not in merit, is the precision with which he detects the wrong and supplies the right reading, the word that alone responds to the need of the passage in order to convert doubt into certainty,

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. 231.

what was obscure into what is clear, what was weak into what is strong."

There can be no doubt that what mainly contributed to Porson's great success as a scholar was his wonderful memory. How indispensable a good memory is to a classical scholar need not be pointed out—it is indeed impossible to imagine one without it. Bentley, it is true, complained that his "memory was none of the best;" but those who have looked at his editions of classical writers, and have observed with what readiness he quotes parallel passages, and the ease with which, when necessary, he summons up his stores of learning, will be inclined to think that if his memory "was none of the best," it was at all events a very useful one. One of the most extraordinary features of Porson's memory was that it was as indiscriminating as it was retentive and capacious. "Nothing," we are told, "came amiss to his memory; he would set a child right in his twopenny fable book, repeat the whole of the moral tale of the "Dean of Badajos," or a page of "Athenæus on Cups," or "Eustathius on Homer." "Whatsoever," says the writer of the "Short Account" of Porson, "pleased the Professor's fancy, he for the most part charged his memory with, and brought it out for the amusement of his company, whether in the shape of an oration of 'Longolius, on St Louis,' or 'Davis's Latin Hudibras,' or the "Pleader's Guide.'" Coxe relates that one afternoon at Cambridge, having read a pamphlet by Ritson, he gave it to Porson to peruse. Meeting Porson the ensuing evening the conversation turned upon the pamphlet, and Coxe alluded to a particular part of it about Shakespeare which had interested him, adding, "I wish I could give you a specific idea of the remainder." Porson thereupon repeated a page and a half word for word. Upon Coxe

remarking, "I suppose you studied the whole evening at the coffee-house and got it by heart," he replied, "Not at all; I do assure you that I only read it once." He once said he would undertake to learn a whole copy of the *Morning Chronicle* by heart in a week. "Roderick Random," one of his favourite books, he asserted he could repeat by heart from beginning to end. Heber informed Maltby that when Edgeworth's essay on "Irish Bulls" came out, Porson used, when somewhat tipsy, to recite whole pages of it *verbatim* with great delight. In the presence of Basil Montague and some others he read a page or two of a book, and then repeated what he had read from memory. "That is very well," said one of the company, "but could the Professor repeat it backwards?" Porson immediately began to do so, and failed only in two words.

He could easily recollect the context of any passage quoted, and its position in any particular edition. One day, calling on a friend who was reading "Thucydides," he was asked the meaning of a word. On hearing the word he did not look at the book, but at once repeated the passage. His friend asked him how he knew it was that passage. "Because," replied Porson, "the word occurs only twice in 'Thucydides,' once on the right hand page in the edition which you are using, and once on the left. I observed on which side you looked, and accordingly knew to which passage you referred." At another time, while sitting in the shop of Priestley the bookseller, a gentleman came in and asked for a copy of a particular edition of "Demosthenes," of which Priestley was not in possession. The gentleman appearing to be disappointed, Porson asked him whether he wished to consult any particular passage in "Demosthenes." The gentleman replied that he did, and mentioned the

passage. Porson then asked Priestley for a copy of the Aldine edition, and having received it, and turned over a few leaves, put his finger on the passage. Several times in company he is said to have repeated the "Rape of the Lock," with the various readings of the different editions and a number of annotations. In Colton's "Lacon" is related the following story, which, whether true or not, at all events shows the widespread reputation of Porson's memory:—"Porson was once travelling in a stage-coach, when a young Oxonian, fresh from college, was amusing the ladies with a variety of talk, and, amongst other things, with a quotation, as he said, from 'Sophocles.' A Greek quotation, and in a coach too, roused our slumbering Professor from a kind of dog-sleep in a corner of the vehicle. Shaking his ears and rubbing his eyes, 'I think, young gentleman,' said he, 'you favoured us just now with a quotation from "Sophocles;" I do not happen to recollect it there.' 'Oh, sir,' replied our tiro, 'the quotation is word for word as I have repeated it, and in "Sophocles" too; but I suspect, sir, it is some time since you were at college.' The Professor, applying his hand to his greatcoat, and taking out a small pocket edition of 'Sophocles,' quietly asked him if he would be kind enough to show him the passage in question in that little book. After rummaging the pages for some time, he replied, 'On second thoughts I now recollect that the passage is in "Euripides."' 'Then, perhaps, sir,' said the Professor, putting his hand into his pocket, and handing him a similar edition of 'Euripides,' 'you will be so kind as to find it for me in that little book.' The young Oxonian returned to the task, but with no better success. The tittering of the ladies informed him that he had got into a hobble. At last, 'Bless me, sir,' said he, 'how dull I am! I

recollect now, yes, I perfectly remember, that the passage is in "Æschylus."' The inexorable professor returned again to his inexhaustible pocket, and was in the act of handing him an 'Æschylus,' when our astonished freshman vociferated: 'Stop the coach. Hullo, coachman, let me out, instantly I say, let me out! There's a fellow here has got the whole Bodleian library in his pocket; let me out, I say, let me out; he must be Porson or the devil.'"

Porson was very modest about his great powers of memory, alleging that his memory was no better than other people could make theirs, if they took the same trouble. "Anyone," he said, "might become as good a critic as I am, if he would only take the trouble to make himself so. I have made myself what I am by intense labour; sometimes in order to impress a thing upon my memory I have read it a dozen times, and transcribed it six." Like many another, Porson sometimes longed for the art of forgetting. "My memory," he once said to a friend, "is a source of misery to me. I never can forget anything."

To his memory may be partly attributed the extraordinary accuracy which distinguishes his writings. He had none of that "disdainful carelessness" which so often led Bentley into blunders. "Whatever you quote," he used to say, "do it fairly and accurately, whether it be 'Joe Millar' or 'Tom Thumb,' or 'The Three Children sliding on the Ice.'" According to Maltby he never wrote a note on any passage of an ancient author, without carefully examining how it had been rendered by the different translators. The carefulness of Porson in this way, despite the great resources of his memory, may afford a useful lesson to those who are too apt to trust to their own recollections, and who hate the irksome task of con-

sulting books to ascertain whether their impressions are accurate. Porson's anxious care was not without its reward. No critic has made fewer blunders than he. In his own department he reigns supreme. He had not the wide range of knowledge possessed by such men as Scaliger, Bentley, and Casaubon; but considered simply as a Greek scholar, no one, British or foreign, even down to our own time, has surpassed him. His accuracy was only equalled by his acuteness. Bentley often emended passages where no emendation was required, apparently for no other purpose than to show his ready ingenuity. Porson never did so. There is scarcely an alteration of the text of any author proposed by him which has not taken its place in succeeding editions.

"He was not only a great scholar," said Parr, "but an honest, a very honest man." That he was so is admitted on all hands. Some very good scholars—Barnes and Elmsley, for example—have not disdained to be guilty of petty larceny in their annotations, by advancing the emendations of others as their own, a crime of which Porson was never guilty. Perhaps the lofty height of scholarship from which he looked down upon his rivals would have prevented him from purloining their slender stores, even if he had been so inclined. "There is one quality of mind," says Bishop Turton, "in which it may be confidently affirmed that Mr Porson had no superior; I mean the most pure and inflexible love of truth. Under the influence of this principle he was cautious, and patient, and persevering in his researches; and scrupulously accurate in stating facts as he found them. All who were intimate with him bear witness to this noble part of his character; and his works confirm the testimony of his friends." "I think him," said Parr, "a sincere and well-principled man; with all his oddities,

and all his fastidiousness, he is quite exempt from base and rancorous malignity; he shows without concern what may be the weaker parts of his character to vulgar minds, and he leaves men of wisdom and genius to discover, and to feel, and to admire, the brighter qualities of his head and heart."

Porson's own estimate of what he had done was a sufficiently humble one; yet, perhaps, not altogether inaccurate. He was not at all of the opinion of Bentley and Parr, who always appeared to consider a great scholar the greatest of men. Being once asked why he had produced so little original matter, he replied, "I doubt if I could produce any original work which could command the attention of posterity. I can only be known by my notes; and I am quite satisfied if, three hundred years hence, it shall be said that one Porson lived towards the close of the eighteenth century, who did a good deal for the text of Euripides." This is not the place to discuss the great question of the merits and value of classical education; still, we may be permitted to express a regret that, of a man of Porson's powers, it cannot, in truth, be said that he accomplished any more than this. That he was excellently qualified for æsthetic as well as for verbal criticism, the prelection he delivered on his election to the professorship abundantly testifies.

About the last critical labour Porson accomplished, was the restoration of the text of the last twenty-six lines of the famous Rosetta stone in the British Museum. This stone is a block of black marble, on which are engraved three inscriptions in hieroglyphics, in Coptic, and in Greek, all of the same import, setting forth the services which Ptolemy the Fifth had done to his country, and decreeing various honours to be paid to him. While Porson was employed in restoring the mutilated inscription, he visited the

museum so often, that he got from the officials the name of Judge Blackstone. The results of his sagacity were afterwards printed in the "Transactions of the Antiquarian Society."

When in 1800 the London Institution was established, Porson was elected principal librarian. The emoluments of the post were £200, and a suite of rooms. The mode in which he discharged his duties was not at all satisfactory. His asthma, to which he had always been subject, had increased; so violent indeed were the paroxysms of it occasionally, that his friends were often afraid he would expire in their presence. His manner of life also was by no means such as to make him a suitable man for the office. His attendance was irregular, he made no effort to increase the library, and he was often brought home after midnight in a state of helpless insensibility. Maltby says he had read a letter Porson received from the directors of the institution, containing the cutting remark, "We only know that you are our librarian by seeing your name attached to the receipts for your salary." This reproof seems to have been well merited, although Porson considered the directors "mercantile and mean beyond merchandise and meanness." In spite of his negligence, Dr Thomas Young relates that he used to attend in his place when the reading-room was open, and to communicate very readily all the information required of him, by those who consulted him respecting the objects of their studies.

The following letter of the Rev. Mr Hughes to Mr Upcott, describing an interview he had with Porson in 1807, gives a good idea of what Porson was in his latter years:—

"My dear Sir,—I wish it were in my power to give

you a more detailed account of my interview with your celebrated predecessor than my memory will now permit. t was the only one I ever had with him. It occurred when I was an undergraduate, and I unfortunately made no notes of it at the time, being then busily engaged reading for my degree, which occupied almost all my houghts. This interview took place in the rooms of my private tutor, between whom and Porson a great intimacy subsisted.

"After about an hour spent in various subjects of conversation, during which the Professor recited a great many beautiful passages from authors in Greek, Latin, French, and English, my tutor, seeing the visitation that was intended for him, feigned an excuse for going into town, and left Porson and myself together. I ought to have observed that he had already produced one bottle of sherry to moisten the Professor's throat, and that he left out another, in case it should be required. Porson's spirits by this time being elevated by the juice of the grape, and being pleased with a well-timed compliment which I had the good luck to address to him, he became very communicative, said he was glad that we had met together, desired me to take up my pen and paper, and directed me to write down, from his dictation, many curious algebraical problems with their solutions; gave me several ingenious methods of summing series; and ran through a great variety of the properties of numbers.

"After almost an hour's occupation in this manner, he said, 'Lay aside your pen, and listen to the history of a man of letters,—how he became a sordid miser from a thoughtless prodigal, a . . . from a . . ., and a misanthrope from a morbid excess of sensibility.' (I forget the intermediate step in the climax). He then commenced a narrative of his own life, from his entrance at

Eton school, through all the most remarkable periods, to the day of our conversation. I was particularly amused with the account of his school anecdotes, the tricks he used to play upon his master and schoolfellows, and the little dramatic pieces which he wrote for private representation. From these he passed to his academical pursuits and studies, his election to the Greek professorship, and his ejection from his fellowship through the influence of Dr Postlethwaite, who, though he had promised it to Porson, exerted it for a relation of his own. 'I was then,' said the Professor, 'almost destitute on the wide world, with less than £40 a-year for my support, and without a profession, for I never could bring myself to subscribe articles of faith. I used often to lie awake during the whole night and wish for a large pearl.'

"He then gave me a history of his life in London, when he took chambers in the Temple, and read at times moderately hard. He also recited to me, word for word, the speech with which he accosted Dr Postlethwaite when he called at his chambers, and which he had long prepared against such an occurrence. At the end of this oration the Doctor said not a word, but burst into tears and left the room. Porson also burst into tears when he had finished the recital of it to me.

"In this manner five hours passed away; at the end of which the Professor, who had finished the second bottle of my friend's sherry, began to clip the King's English, to cry like a child at the close of his periods, and in other respects to show marks of extreme debility. At length he rose from his chair, staggered to the door, and made his way down stairs without taking the slightest notice of his companion. I retired to my college, and next morning was informed by a friend that he had been out upon a search the previous evening for the Greek

Professor, whom he discovered near the outskirts of the town leaning upon the arm of a dirty bargeman, and amusing him by the most humorous and laughable anecdotes. I never even saw Porson after this day, but I shall never cease to regret that I did not commit his history to writing while it was fresh in my memory."

The end was at hand. One day in September 1808, while walking along the Strand, Porson was seized with an apoplectic fit, which deprived him of speech and of the power of his hands. None of those who gathered round him, when he fell senseless, knowing who he was, he was conveyed to the workhouse in Castle Street, St Martin's Lane, where medical assistance was immediately given, and he was partially restored to consciousness. As, however, he was still unable to speak, and nothing was found upon him to indicate his place of residence, an advertisement was inserted in the newspapers to apprise his friends of his condition. It described him as a "tall man, apparently about forty-five years of age, dressed in a blue coat and black breeches, and having in his pocket a gold watch, a trifling quantity of silver, and a memorandum book, the leaves of which were filled chiefly with Greek lines written in pencil, and partly effaced; two or three lines of Latin, and an algebraical calculation—the Greek extracts being principally from ancient medical works." This account was seen by Mr Savage, under-librarian of the London Institution, who immediately hastened to Castle Street, where he found Porson, very weak, but now able to converse and to walk. Upon reaching the Institution he recovered a little, and went down to the library, where he met Dr Adam Clarke, who has left an interesting account of the interview. "That his prodigious memory had failed him a little for some months before," he writes, "I had myself noticed, and

had spoken of it with regret to some of my friends; but neither then, nor at the time of which I am now writing, could any other symptom of mental decay be discovered. What follows will probably appear a sufficient proof that he was not only in possession of his ordinary faculties, but that his critical powers were vigorous and capable of discerning the nicest distinctions.

"Having that morning occasion to call at the Institution, to consult an edition of a work to which the course of my reading had obliged me to refer, on returning from one of the inner rooms, I found that, since my entrance, Mr Porson had walked into that room through which I had just before passed. I went up to him, shook hands, and seeing him look extremely ill, and not knowing what had happened, expressed both my surprise and regret. He then drew near to the window, and began, in a low, tremulous, interrupted voice, to account for his present appearance; but his speech was so much affected, that I found it difficult to understand what he said. He proceeded, however, to give me, as well as he could, an account of his late seizure, and two or three times with particular emphasis said, 'I have just escaped death.'"

Dr Clarke then proceeds to give an account of a conversation he had with him about a Greek inscription. His narrative concludes as follows:—

"Seeing him so very ill and weak, I thought it best to withdraw, and, having shook hands with him (which, alas! was the last time that I was to have that satisfaction) and, with a pained heart, earnestly wished him a speedy restoration to health, I walked out of the room, promising to visit him, if possible, on Thursday morning, with the Greek inscription. He accompanied me to the head of the great staircase, making some remarks on his indisposition which I did not distinctly hear; and then,

leaning over the balustrade, he continued speaking to me till I was more than half-way downstairs. When nearly at the bottom I looked up, and saw him still leaning over the balustrade; I stopped a moment, as if to take a last view of a man to whose erudition and astonishing critical acumen my mind had ever bowed down with becoming reverence, and then said, 'Sir, I am truly sorry to see you so low.' To which he answered, 'I have had a narrow escape from death.' And then leaving the stairhead, he returned towards the library. This was the last conversation he was ever capable of holding on any subject. On matters of religion, except in a critical way, he was, I believe, never forward to converse. I should have been glad to have known his views at this solemn time; but as there were some gentlemen present when we met in the library, the place and time were improper."

Porson lingered on for a few days after this interview, in a very feeble condition. Sometimes he appeared to be in full possession of his faculties, but at other times his mind seemed to wander a good deal. On the night of the 25th September 1808 he expired, exactly as the clock struck twelve.

His body was conveyed to Cambridge, and buried with the highest academical honours in Trinity College Chapel, at the foot of the statue of Newton. His epitaph is his name alone, inscribed on a plain slab.

Of Porson's library, which was large and valuable, between two or three hundred volumes, enriched, as most of his books were, with annotations by himself, were purchased by Trinity College, Cambridge, for a thousand guineas. The rest of them were sold by auction, and realised over £1000. Porson died in comfortable circumstances, leave behind him £800 in the funds.

Porson was not an amiable man. Himself of rigid

and inflexible honesty, he had no toleration for pretenders in any walk of life. A certain smatterer once observing to him that Greek was an easy language, he sternly replied, "Not to you, sir." Although he highly esteemed Parr's kind-heartedness, he had a great contempt for the affectation which marred his character. When he heard that Parr in his "Remarks on Combe's Statement" had called him a "giant in literature," he drew back, and said, "How should he be able to take the measure of a giant?" When, in a large company, Parr seized the opportunity of airing his favourite topic, the origin of evil, by observing, "Pray, what do you think, Mr Porson, about the introduction of moral and physical evil into the world?" Porson drily replied, "I think, Doctor, we should have done very well without them." On another occasion Parr said, "Mr Porson, with all your learning I do not think you know much about metaphysics." "Not of your metaphysics, Doctor," was the withering reply—a retort worthy of Johnson. Indeed Porson's powers of repartee were far from inconsiderable. To a gentleman who at the close of a fierce dispute exclaimed, "My opinion of you, sir, is most contemptible," he replied, "I never knew an opinion of yours that was not contemptible."

Many of his sarcastic sayings are on record. "Mr Southey," he observed, "is indeed a wonderful writer; his works will be read when Homer and Virgil are forgotten." On hearing that a legacy had been left to Bishop Tomline, whom he intensely hated, by a gentleman who had only seen him once, he said, "There would have been no such legacy if he had seen him twice." Being present at a book sale where Wilkes' "Characters of Theophrastus" were put up, he remarked that it was strange Wilkes should be a sponsor for characters, when

he had no character himself. The mutual laudations of Hayley and Miss Seward earned his profoundest contempt, which he manifested by writing for them the following dialogue:—

MISS SEWARD—
Tuneful poet, Britain's glory;
Mr Hayley, that is you.

HAYLEY—
Ma'am, you carry all before you;
Trust me, Lichfield swan, you do.

MISS SEWARD—
Ode didactic, epic sound;
Mr Hayley, you're divine.

HAYLEY—
Madam, take my oath upon it,
You yourself are all the nine.

Porson's opinions on the study of Latin and Greek were not at all those of a pedant. "If I had a son," said he, "I would endeavour to make him familiar with French and English authors rather than the classics; Greek and Latin are only luxuries." Modern Greek and Latin poetry he did not at all esteem, observing that all that is good in the composition of modern Greek is good for nothing, for "unless such composition be a cento, it can never be certainly correct; and if it be a cento, where is its value?" When the first portion of the *Musæ Etonenses* came out, he exclaimed that it was "all trash, fit only to be put behind the fire." His miscellaneous reading was wide and various, extending to all kinds of books in Greek, Latin, French, and English. Shakespeare he studied with particular attention, and proposed several emendations of the text.

One of Porson's characteristics was a surly independence, often carried to excess. Indeed, it must be admitted that in this respect he forcibly reminds one of Savage, though otherwise far superior to that profligate, who was somehow or other so attractive to Johnson. Both were for the greater part of their lives more or less indebted to charitable friends for the means of subsistence, and both were only too ready to abuse their friends at the very time they were receiving kindness from them. "Notwithstanding the efforts which Parr made to secure Porson a pension," says Dr Johnstone, with too much truth, "Porson privately sneered and jeered, and once lampooned him under the name of Dr Bellenden." He ceased visiting Sir George Baker, who had been one of his greatest benefactors, for no other apparent reason than that Sir George had let fall some words of remonstrance on the subject of Porson's irregularities. He had a great dislike to being visited, or invited out merely for show. "He was once dining with Macintosh, who expressed a wish that he should accompany him on the following day to a dinner at Holland House to meet Fox. Porson made some reply that sounded like consent; and Macintosh, meeting Mr Maltby next morning, told him that Porson was going to Lord Holland's. Maltby, coming in contact with Porson shortly after, observed to him, 'I hear that you are going to dine at Holland House to-day.' 'Who told you so?' 'Macintosh.' 'But I certainly shall not go,' rejoined Porson; 'they invite me merely out of curiosity, and after they have satisfied it, would like to kick me downstairs.' 'But, said Maltby, 'Fox is coming expressly from St Ann's Hill to be introduced to you.' This attraction, however, was ineffective; Porson persisted in staying away; and Lord Holland told Rogers many years

afterwards, that Fox had been greatly disappointed at not meeting Porson on that occasion."* Once, when at Cambridge, two gentlemen called on him one day at his rooms, and said they had come to see him. Porson made no reply, but ordered a pair of candles. When they were brought, he said, "Now then, gentlemen, you will be able to see me better." With equal civility he treated two farmers from East Ruston, who, calling at his rooms, told him that they did not like to leave the town without seeing Mr Porson. "Well, now then, gentlemen," said Porson, "you have seen me; I wish you good morning," and walked off.

* "Watson," p. 379.

SAMUEL PARR.

SAMUEL PARR.

WHATEVER other difficulties the writer of a biography of Parr may have to contend with, want of materials is not one of them. First and foremost we have the "Memoirs of his Life and Writings," by Dr Johnstone, an octavo volume of over eight hundred pages, with two stout volumes of correspondence by way of appendix. Then there is the *Parriana* of the redoubtable Mr E. H. Barker, O. T. N.,* an extraordinary production, consisting of two large volumes full of information not only about Dr Parr and his friends and acquaintances, but *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. Besides these two main fountains of information, there are numerous magazine and review articles, and other miscellanies of that description, relating to him; for in his lifetime Dr Parr bulked largely in the public eye, and was, indeed, one of the most prominent men of his day. Yet it is not easy to write a sketch of Parr's life and character. An ardent political partizan, he had to undergo the fate of all ardent political partizans, of being extravagantly praised by his friends and unmercifully abused by his foes, so that an impartial writer has difficulty in holding the balance equably between his admirers and his despisers. Moreover, some portion of the Doctor's oddity, which was

* These mysterious letters must have puzzled many who have seen them on the title page of one of Barker's many productions. They mean, *Of Thetford, Norfolk.*

great, seems to have communicated itself to his biographers—their narratives are copious when they might well have been succinct, and succinct when they might well have been copious; details of Parr's private and domestic life are sparingly given, while matters of little interest are sometimes dealt with at unmerciful length. However, there are always the two volumes of correspondence to fall back on, which tend to elucidate some portions of Parr's life and character better than any of his biographers, and help to make easier the task of furnishing a conceivable outline of the life of this puzzling and extraordinary man.

Samuel Parr was born on 15th January 1747, at Harrow-on-the-Hill, where his father practised as a surgeon and apothecary. Parr senior appears in many ways to have resembled the subject of our memoir. Although "the petty tyrant of his fireside," he was a man possessed of many excellent qualities, distinguished by the rectitude of his principles and a manly and dignified spirit of independence, and, says Dr Johnstone, "by a noble disregard to the accumulation of wealth." Parr's mother was doatingly fond of her son, indulging him in all sorts of dainties to the detriment of his health; but she was not long spared for him to enjoy her fostering care. She died when he was about fifteen years of age, and his father marrying again within a year, Parr laid the foundation of an early hatred between himself and his step-mother, by refusing to lay aside his mourning for his own mother on the day of the marriage. An attack of small-pox, which he had about his twelfth year, disfigured his countenance greatly. He himself used to relate that, walking one day with Sir William Jones, who was one of his schoolfellows, Jones suddenly stopped, and cried out, "Parr, if you should have the good luck

to live for forty years, you will stand a chance of overtaking your face."

In the sixth year of his age Parr was entered at Harrow School. Besides Sir William Jones, already mentioned, he had for his favourite companion William Bennet, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne, who was Parr's good genius throughout life. The adage, that the child is father of the man, is well exemplified in the case of Parr. His fondness for ecclesiastical pomp and ceremony appeared when he was only nine or ten years of age. He used to put on one of his father's shirts as a surplice, and read the church service to an audience consisting of his sister and cousins; and occasionally he would bury a dog or a kitten with the rites of Christian burial. When he was about nine years old, Dr Allen saw him sitting on the churchyard gate at Harrow, looking grave and serious while his schoolfellows were all at play. "Sam, why do you not play with the others?" cried Allen. "Do you not know, sir," replied Parr with the utmost solemnity, "that I am intended to be a parson."

At the age of fourteen Parr had attained the proud position of head boy of the school, but, as it was his father's intention that he should follow after his profession, he was removed from school and placed in his father's shop. But manifestly nature had not intended Parr for a physician. He employed all the time he could spare in reading the Greek and Latin authors, and doubtless paid more attention to the Latinity of his father's prescriptions than to their component parts. At length his father was induced to enter him at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in the summer of 1765. There he had for his tutor Dr Farmer, the famous black-letter collector, a man of such singular indolence that he neglected even to send out his accounts, and is believed to have lost large sums of

money by putting into the fire unopened letters which contained remittances and requiring answers. While at Cambridge, Parr was, as might be expected, a diligent and painstaking student; but he remained there only fourteen months, his resources being cut off by the sudden death of his father. On balancing his accounts he found that his worldly wealth consisted of three pounds seventeen shillings, most of his father's fortune having been bequeathed to his step-mother. It has been asserted that if Parr had been aware beforehand of possessing so considerable a sum, he would not have left Cambridge, which he quitted with great regret. Dr Sumner, the learned head-master of Harrow, offered him the situation of his first assistant, which, in the circumstances in which he was placed, he was glad to accept. In this position he remained for five years, discharging his duties with assiduity and success. The only notable event in Parr's life at this period was the death of his cousin, Frank Parr, to whom he was greatly attached. Though then very poor—his salary was only fifty pounds—he cheerfully undertook, in order to make his cousin's death-bed more comfortable, to pay all his debts, which amounted to two hundred and twenty three pounds, and besides this, he settled an annuity of five pounds on his mother. That Parr was a thoroughly warm-hearted man, many events in his life amply prove, and the letters he wrote to his dying cousin are full of tenderness and affection.

In 1771 Dr Sumner died, and Parr became a candidate for the vacant head-mastership of Harrow. He vigorously prosecuted his candidature, but his hopes were frustrated by the appointment of Dr Benjamin Heath, an Etonian, and a scholar of considerable eminence. This was a most bitter disappointment to Parr,

who seems to have been pretty confident of success, and it reacted with disastrous consequences on all his subsequent life—souring his temper, and making him often suspicious and fretful without any adequate reason. The election of Heath proved very distasteful to many of the Harrow boys, who had been desirous that Parr should be appointed, and a rebellion ensued. In an evil hour Parr threw up his situation of assistant, and set up a rival school at Stanmore, a few miles from Harrow, where about forty of his old pupils followed him. To aid him in establishing this seminary, some kind friends came forward with generous pecuniary aid—Mr William Sumner, in particular, a brother of the late head-master, lending him £2000, at the nominal interest of two per cent., and waiting patiently for repayment during twenty-one long years.

The Stanmore establishment was not a success. It had its origin in a fit of blind indignation, and no one cognizant of the circumstances could have been very sanguine about it. Although many persons of position and influence, among them Lord Dartmouth, countenanced the institution in the best way possible—by sending their sons there—it dwindled gradually away. "Stanmore," says Mr Roderick, Parr's assistant master, "was the very worst place where he could have fixed himself. From the vicinity of the two places, a constant intercourse was kept up for two or more years between the boys of the two schools. This occasioned great irregularity. Parr's situation was one of extreme difficulty. The upper boys had followed him from attachment, but had not that awe for him that they had entertained for Dr Sumner; and they probably conceived him under obligations to them, so that they took what liberties they pleased. Some would go to shoot on the heath, and

it may be inferred from Maurice, that they sometimes traversed the country on horseback." Moreover, the conduct of Parr at this time was erratic in the extreme. Mr Roderick states that he brought upon himself the ridicule of the neighbourhood and passengers by many foolish acts; such as riding in high prelatical pomp through the streets on a black saddle, bearing in his hand a long cane or wand, such as women used to have, with an ivory head like a crosier, which was probably the reason why he liked it; at other times he was seen stalking through the streets in a dirty striped morning gown. De Quincey thinks that at this period Parr really was mad; but surely this is putting too harsh an interpretation on his eccentricities. The two dreams of his life were a four-in-hand and a bishopric. As neither, in present circumstances, seemed at all within reach, Parr had to content himself with symbols of them: the black saddle, perchance, representing the four-in-hand, and the "long cane with an ivory head like a crosier" representing the bishopric. Like many more of us, he found the conflict between the real and ideal hard enough to bear; and if, in this way, he endeavoured to bring his castles in the air into some sort of practical realization, who shall blame him? We confess to viewing Parr's eccentricities at Stanmore with a lurking kindness—they were so genuinely characteristic of the man, and not, like some of his subsequent freaks, mere pieces of affectation, and, therefore, in every way detestable.

Stanmore appears to have been an unlucky place for Parr in all directions. A wife—Miss Jane Marsingale, a lady of an ancient Yorkshire family—was provided for him by his friend Dr Askew, and he found that the consequences of courting by proxy were far from desirable. From the little we know of Parr's domestic life, it seems

to have been anything but a happy one. Doubtless there were faults on both sides, as, perhaps, there generally are in such cases. Parr does not strike one as a man one would have cared to live with, and all accounts agree in representing his wife as a lady of violent, headstrong temper. She described her husband, with a certain measure of truth, as "born in a whirlwind and bred a tyrant."

Owing to the declining state of his seminary at Stanmore, Parr was glad to accept the mastership of an endowed school at Colchester, where he went to reside in 1777. When applying for the office he obtained letters of recommendation from no less a man than Dr Samuel Johnson, with whom he appears to have become acquainted through the medium of Bennet Langton. While at Colchester, he obtained priests' orders at the hands of Bishop Lowth, and enjoyed the society and friendship of Dr Nathaniel Forster and Thomas Twining, the well-known translator of Aristotle's "Poetics." His combative spirit found vent by getting into a squabble with the trustees of the school concerning a lease; on which subject he printed a pamphlet, which, however, was never published—the prudent Sir William Jones, to whom it was submitted, constantly noting the pages as "too violent—too strong." Dr Johnstone says: "The pamphlet is marked with all the peculiarities of Parr's style: its vigour, its vehemence, its clearness, its pointed antithesis, and its copious illustration and splendid imagery." Unfortunately for Parr's reputation and his own, he proceeds to give specimens. What are we to think of the critical sagacity of a man who looks upon schoolboy magniloquence like the following, as characterised by "splendid imagery?":—

"That day, indeed, I expected to find a day of fierce

contention, and therefore I had arrayed myself in a panoply of the trustiest armour—in the breastplate of innocence, the shield of the law, the sword of indignation, and the helmet of intrepidity. When I first entered the lists against these hardy combatants, I determined to throw away the scabbard, and, firmly as I confided in the justice of my cause, I imagined that my antagonists would not yield me *dulcem sine pulvere palmam*, that they would dispute every inch of ground with me, and at least save their credit by retreating with their weapons in their hands. But my expectations were altogether disappointed. Instead of the fury of a contest we had not even the mockery of a skirmish; not one argument was produced, nor one allusion was dropped upon the offensive topic of the agreement." This may serve as a specimen of Parr's bad style. Unfortunately for his fame, it was the style in which he generally wrote, especially when straining after eloquence and grandeur.

This pamphlet was not the only literary project that engaged Parr's attention while at Colchester. The following letter from Sir William Jones shows that he had also some intention of publishing a sermon. "My dear Friend,—Your letter overtook me a few days ago, and I am so hurried that I must answer it in very few words. If your sermon be not likely to hurt you and your family by giving fruitless offence to men in power, I will answer for your reputation, and exhort you to print it with your name; without it, you must not expect to have the expenses of publication defrayed, as few men read a book with so unpromising a title as, 'A Sermon on the 27th of February 1778.' I shall not be in the Temple till the 30th of April; then I shall be wholly at your service. You will send a copy of your discourse to me, and may rely on my sincerity as well as on my attention; but, in

the name of the Muses, let it be written in a *legible* hand, for, to speak plainly with you, your English and Latin characters are so ill formed that I have infinite difficulty to read your letters, and have abandoned all hope of deciphering many of them. Your Greek is wholly illegible—it is perfect algebra; and your strictures on my Isæus, excellent and valuable as they are, have given more fatigue to my head and eyes than the whole translation. Half an hour in the day would be as much time as you could employ in forming your characters; and you would save four times as much of your friends' time. I will speak with the sincerity which you like: either you can write better or you cannot; if you can, you ought to write better; if not, you ought to learn. I write this as fast as I can move my pen, yet to me it is perfectly legible; it should be plainer still if my pen were better, or I were less hurried." Sir William Jones was not the only one who complained about Parr's handwriting. It was a constant source of annoyance to his friends and himself. He may, indeed, claim the "bad eminence" of having been the very worst writer on record. The letters of his correspondents are full of complaints about the difficulty they had in deciphering his letters, and contain many plaintive requests that he would employ an amanuensis. He himself was disposed partly to attribute the fact that he had never accomplished any great work, to the illegibility of his handwriting, which made his manuscripts a mass of unintelligible hieroglyphics, useless to himself and others.

Parr's residence at Colchester was not of long duration, nor, while there, does he appear to have achieved any great measure of success. In the summer of 1778 the head-mastership of Norwich school became vacant, and he was appointed to the office, entering upon his

duties in the beginning of January 1779. Early in his career there he received a letter of admonition from Sir William Jones, who, although always a warm friend to Parr, seems to have had a very accurate appreciation of the weak points in his character. He writes: "I rejoice that your situation is agreeable to you; and only grieve that you are such a distance from London. You speak well in your letter of the Dean; yet I have been told that you are engaged in a controversy with him. Oh, my friend! remember and emulate Newton, who once entered into a philosophical contest, but soon found, he said, that 'he was parting with his peace of mind for a shadow.' Surely the elegance of ancient poetry and rhetoric, the contemplation of God's works and God's ways, the respectable task of making boys learned and men virtuous, may employ the forty or fifty years you have to live more serenely, more laudably, and more profitably than the vain warfare of controversial divinity, and the dark mines and countermines of uncertain metaphysics." As Dr Johnstone well observes, "these are golden sentences;" and if Parr had always kept them in mind, his life would have been a happier and more useful one. But throughout his career, Parr, as has been truly remarked, seems to have been decidedly of the opinion of John Wesley, who said there could be no fitter subject for a Christian man's prayers than to be delivered from what the world calls "prudence."

At Norwich Parr first appeared before the public as an author by the publication of three sermons, one on "The Truth of Christianity," and the others, "A Discourse on Education," and "A Discourse on the Late Fast." "If," says Dr Johnstone, "popularity be the seal of utility, public approbation has stamped this discourse on education as the best of Parr's works." Though written, like

all his other productions, in an extremely *ore rotundo* style, it certainly contains many sound and striking sentiments. At Norwich, also, Parr obtained his first preferment, being presented by Lady Jane Trafford, the mother of one of his pupils, with the living of Asterby, which, in 1783, he exchanged for the perpetual curacy of Hatton in Warwickshire. Bishop Lowth, at the request of Lord Dartmouth, not long after this gave him a prebend in St Paul's, which, though of trifling value at the time, afterwards became a source of affluence to Parr. It is sad to think that, during the greater part of his active career, Parr felt the heavy pressure of pecuniary embarrassment. The following incident is related by one of his biographers. He was one day in the library of Mr Field, when his eye was caught by the title of Stephens' "Greek Thesaurus." Suddenly turning about, and striking vehemently the arm of Mr Field, whom he addressed in a manner very usual with him, he said, "Ah! my friend, may you never be forced, as I was at Norwich, to sell that work, to me so precious, from absolute and urgent necessity."

In 1785, for some unknown reason, Parr resigned the school at Norwich, and went to live at Hatton, where he opened a private academy. Here occurs a favourable opportunity for considering Dr Parr as a schoolmaster, in which character most of his life was spent. We must confess the Doctor strikes us as having been far from a model preceptor. He was partial, inconsistent, and subject to sudden gusts of passion. To those of his pupils to whom he took a fancy, he was a steady friend throughout their whole career; but a schoolmaster should have no favourites,—or, at any rate, should not show that he has any,—and should dispense even-handed justice to all. In the euphemistic language of Dr Johnstone, "He pro-

fessed himself an advocate for the old and salutary discipline of our public schools. He resisted all the specious arguments which are employed in vindicating those refinements which the partiality of parents, the ingenuity of experimentalists, and the growing luxury of the age have introduced into the education of youth. He stoutly appealed to his own personal experience, and to the established practice of our most celebrated seminaries, in favour of those rules which, for many ages, have produced the best scholars, the finest writers, the most useful members of society in private life, and the most distinguished characters in public." In plainer English, Dr Parr was a notorious flagellator and extremely fond of flogging. There was a considerable spice of the tyrant in his composition, and as circumstances restrained him from tyrannizing over men, he had to content himself with tyrannizing over boys. A certain Rev. Mr Stewart, who worshipped Parr even more than Boswell worshipped Johnson, has the following remarks on this subject in the *Parriana:* "Two of our present prelates, I believe, were at one time his pupils. One, at least, I am sure was. Parr used to exult in the narrative of the sound birchings he had conferred on him, rehearse it with his hands, and chuckle during the rehearsal. This very circumstance augurs well of the pupil's merit. While Parr wielded the ferule, his invariable rule was, never to punish lads of stunted capacity, nor try to extort from mediocrity of talent treasures which nature had not been prodigal enough to bestow. No, the really talented he attacked—to those, nature had been bountiful—and resolute Parr was to make her gifts be cultivated. There is a distinguished divine of the day, justly respected for his attainments and merits, who was mainly indebted to Parr's instructions for his celebrity. For some time

after he entered the seminary over which the great scholar ruled, the lad was classed as a 'mediocre;' and enjoyed in consequence the comparative amnesty extended to that grade. It happened, however, that one evening, after school hours, the head assistant called to acquaint Parr with the momentous discovery that 'from some recent observations he was led to conclude —— was a lad of genius.' 'Say you so?' roared out Parr in one of his delighted chuckles, 'then begin to flog tomorrow morning.' The distinctive birch was, I learn, not forgotten. The eclipse of genius speedily wore off." Certainly anecdotes like these do not tend to raise Parr in one's estimation; however, things have changed since then, and perhaps Parr's ideas of scholastic discipline were substantially the universally received ones at that time. One great qualification as a teacher Parr is admitted on all hands to have possessed; he was a sound and careful scholar, with a genuine enthusiasm for classical learning, which cannot have failed to prove contagious.

Parr went to reside at Hatton in 1786, and, except on a visit, never afterwards left it. At first the place pleased him much. "I have," he says, in a letter to a friend, "good neighbours, and a Poor, ignorant, dissolute, insolent and ungrateful beyond all example. I like Warwickshire very much. I have made great regulations, viz.: bells chime three times as long, Athanasian creed, communion service at the altar, swearing act, children catechised first Sunday in the month, private baptisms discouraged, public performed after second lesson, recovered a £100 a-year left to the poor, with interest amounting to £115, all of which I am to put out and settle a trust in the spring, examining all the charities." When, however, the novelty of his situation wore off he

did not find it so desirable, and even went so far as to characterise Warwickshire as the Bœotia of England, two centuries behind in civilization. Being a man of exceedingly active mind, he endeavoured to be placed in the commission of peace for the county of Warwick, but his application was unsuccessful. In 1795 he made a similar application to Lord Warwick, and asked the reason why his name was omitted in so large a nomination of justices of the peace. His lordship's reply is a model in its way:—

"Sir,—I apprehend that the proper answer to the letter which I have just received from you is, that I do not consider myself as responsible to any individual for the motive of my conduct while acting in the discharge of my public duty."

Why his applications were so persistently refused, does not exactly appear. "Perhaps," it has been said with considerable truth, "they were afraid that the great scholar would have dogmatized on the bench till he had disgusted his colleagues, and passed sentence on the culprit till he had spoiled their dinner; that he would have condemned the laws when he was only called upon to administer them, and scrutinized the conduct of the constable with as much severity as that of the thief; that he would have been debating when he should have been passing the accounts, and have impeded all decisions by showing how much might be said against any; that he would have looked upon a poacher with too much lenity, and a rioter for Church and King with too much wrath; that he would have found in every pauper who appealed to him a victim, and in every overseer a tyrant; that whilst his brother justices could see no signs of grace in a culprit, from the evidence against him, he would have discovered virtue in his looks, and would have peremp-

torily pronounced, that 'if that man be lewdly given, he deceived him.' If any or all of those doubts crossed the mind of the Lord Lieutenant, we confess we do not think they would have been wholly groundless."

In 1787 appeared one of the most famous of Parr's productions, the *Preface* to a new edition of "Bellenden." William Bellenden, a Scotch writer who flourished about the beginning of the seventeenth century, conceived the idea of a work, "De Tribus Luminibus Romanorum," in which he designed to explain the character and merits of Cicero, and, it is supposed, of Seneca and the elder Pliny, for he only lived to finish the first of these worthies. Taking up the parable, Parr reprinted a work of Bellenden, "De Statu Prisci Orbis," with a long Latin preface on the "Three Lights of Britain," Lord North, Fox, and Burke. This forms one of the most successful modern imitations of Cicero's style, and raised Parr's fame as a scholar considerably. The absurdity, however, of writing an essay on the politics of the day in Latin, and prefixing it to an edition of such a writer as Bellenden, is too obvious to require comment. The excellence of the Latinity of the preface constituted its main claim to attention. Parr was an extremely rash and violent politician, praising his friends and abusing his enemies with equal extravagance. Two of the Lights appear to have returned him no thanks for all the laudations with which they were bespattered. Burke, however, with his usual courtesy, wrote Parr a pretty long letter, for the most part avoiding all reference to politics, but discoursing eloquently upon the advantages of classical learning. What Parr himself thought of the manner in which he had executed his task may be gathered from the following ludicrous effusion to his friend Homer, which may serve as a specimen of many of the kind. He was never

the man to hesitate to blow his own trumpet when occasion required:—

"DEAR SIR,—What will you say? or, rather, what will I say myself of myself? It is now ten o'clock at night, and I am smoking a quiet pipe, after a most vehement and, I think, a most splendid effort of composition; an effort it was indeed, a mighty and a glorious effort—for the object of it is to lift up Burke to the pinnacle where he ought to have been placed before, and to drag down Lord Chatham from that eminence to which the cowardice of his hearers and the credulity of the public had most weakly exalted the impostor and the father of impostors! Read it, dear Harry—read it, I say, aloud; read it again and again; and when your tongue has turned its edge from me to the father of Mr Pitt—when your ears tingle and ring with my sonorous periods—when your heart glows and beats with the fond and triumphant remembrance of Edmund Burke—then, dear Homer, you will forgive me, you will love me, you will congratulate me, and readily will you take upon yourself the trouble of printing what in writing has cost me so much greater though not much longer trouble. Old boy, I tell you that no part of the preface is better conceived, or better written; none will be read more eagerly, or felt by those whom you wish to feel it, more severely. Old boy, old boy, it's a stinger! And now to other business."

We now come to a very curious piece of literary history, of which, however, only the leading details can be given here. Among Parr's many friends was Dr White of Oxford, who had been appointed to deliver the Bampton Lectures. He applied to Dr Parr for help in this task, which was cheerfully given and gratefully acknowledged. The lectures when delivered were received with great applause, and White seemed to be on the high road

to fame and fortune. But Parr was not the only one from whom he had enjoyed the benefit of assistance. He had also, unknown to Parr, employed the Rev. Mr Badcock, a learned dissenting minister in Devonshire, and had given him a note for £500 for his trouble. On Mr Badcock's death, which occurred in 1788, this note was found in his pocket. Dr Gabriel of Bath, a friend of Mr Badcock's, had an interview with White on the subject of this note, but did not come to any satisfactory conclusion on the subject. Eventually White accused Gabriel of being in league with Badcock's sister to pick his pocket. Gabriel, being naturally indignant at this, threatened to bring the whole transaction before the University unless White apologised. White did not apologise, and Gabriel was as good as his word. When the news of Badcock's co-operation reached Parr he refused to believe it, and finally told it as a secret to Mr Smyth of Pembroke College, that it was himself who gave White the assistance. Gradually the whole affair oozed out, and White stood convicted of the utmost treachery and duplicity. Parr's share of the lecture amounted to about one-fifth. An amusing part of the business is the change that occurs in the tone of White's letters to Parr after his perfidy had been discovered. "From the moment of detection the Professor threw off the mask of being Parr's gratefully obliged servant, and it was with difficulty that any answer could be extracted from him." Perhaps the most curious thing about the whole affair is, that it does not appear to have materially injured White's reputation. "Notwithstanding," says Dr Johnstone, "this full conviction of his having received the most important literary assistance without any acknowledgment of it, and even after the publication of the two pamphlets, White's character was still supported

by some persons of great name in the University of Oxford; and the Government thought so highly of his talents, and so little of his detection, that they awarded him with a canonry of Christ Church, which Parr had vainly solicited for him in the foregoing memorial, when the Professor's character was yet without impeachment."

The quiet duties of pastor and teacher incumbent on him at Hatton did not by any means satisfy Parr's restless nature. To him the troubled waters of controversy possessed an irresistible attraction; no sooner was he done with one dispute than he eagerly entered on another. In 1788 Bishop Hurd published a new edition of Warburton's works, leaving out certain juvenile tracts and translations as unworthy of the matured talents of so great a man; and, instead of a "Life," promising one to the purchasers of his works. Parr immediately seized hold of these omissions as pretexts for literary warfare. Under the title of "Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian," he republished the tracts Hurd had omitted, along with two pamphlets, "The Delicacy of Friendship" and the "Letter to Leland," which Hurd had written long ago, and which he had shown himself anxious to suppress. To these he added a preface and dedication in which Hurd is attacked with all the fury and venom Parr was master of. The inquiry naturally arises: How did Parr come to regard Hurd with such intense animosity? The answer is not far to seek. Here it is:—

"Dr Parr went to Hartlebury (Hurd's residence). He was treated coldly, not even a repast was offered him. He probably, during the effervescence of his rage, recollected the "Delicacy of Friendship," which he had caused to be copied at Norwich, and perhaps he did not forget the sneer concerning the long vernacular sermons at Whitehall; and his fancy, under such influence, would

naturally conjure up a phantom in the shape of Bishop Hurd which had marched across the high road of his interests, and had blighted the prospects of his preferment."

As the style of the *Preface* has been much praised—Warton is reported to have said that, if called upon to point out some of the finest sentences in English prose, he would quote from it—and as this praise is not unmerited, the following extract from it, containing a tribute to the memory of Warburton and Johnson, will afford a favourable specimen of Parr's powers as an English writer. An example of Parr's bad style has already been given; what follows, though rather verbose and magniloquent, is not without power :—

"Few men have made a more conspicuous figure than Warburton upon the great theatre of learning; few have been engaged in more bustling and splendid scenes; few have sustained more difficult or more interesting characters. It is therefore to be lamented that the public have not yet been favoured with a regular and impartial account of his progress in knowledge; of his advancement in the church; of the embarrassments with which he struggled, and over which he triumphed; of the connections which he formed; of the provocations by which he was harassed; and especially of the opinions which, in the cooler and more serious reflections of his old age, he really entertained of all his own hardier exertions made in the vigour of his youth. But whatever materials for the history of his life may be in the hands of his executors, and whatever may be the ability of those who shall have the courage to use them, his character will never be drawn with more justness of design or more strength of colouring than have been already employed by the great biographer of the English poets. The dawn of

Warburton's fame was overspread with many clouds, which the native force of his mind quickly dispelled. Soon after his emersion from them he was honoured by the friendship of Pope, and the enmity of Bolingbroke. In the fulness of his meridian glory he was courted by Lord Hardwick and Lord Mansfield; and his setting lustre was viewed with nobler feelings than those of mere forgiveness by the amiable and venerable Bishop Lowth. Halifax revered him, Balguy loved him; and in two immortal works Johnson has stood forth in the foremost rank of his admirers. By the testimony of such a man impertinence must be abashed, and malignity itself must be softened. Of literary merit, Johnson, as we all know, was a sagacious but a most severe judge. Such was his discernment, that he pierced into the most secret springs of human action; and such was his integrity, that he always weighed the moral character of his fellow-creatures in the balance of the sanctuary. He was too courageous to propitiate a rival, and too proud to truckle to a superior. Warburton he knew as I knew him, and as every man of sense and virtue would wish to be known: I mean both from his writings, and from the writings of those who dissented from his principles, or who envied his reputation. But as to favours, he had never received or asked any from the Bishop of Gloucester; and, if my memory fails me not, he had seen him only once, when they met almost without design, conversed without much effort, and parted without any lasting expression of hatred or affection. Yet, with all the ardour of sympathetic genius, Johnson has done that spontaneously and ably which by some writers had been before attempted injudiciously, and which by others, from whom more successful attempts might have been expected, has not hitherto been done at all. He spoke

well of Warburton without insulting those whom Warburton despised. He suppressed not the imperfections of this extraordinary man, while he endeavoured to do justice to his numerous and transcendental excellencies. He defended him when living, amidst the clamours of his enemies, and praised him when dead, amid the silence of his friends. I have stated these facts, not with any abject view of palliating the censures which I may have passed upon Warburton's failings, nor yet from any vain confidence in my abilities to exalt his character, but in obedience to the warm and fervent dictates of my own mind,—of a mind which he has often enlightened, often enchanted, and, in some degree, I would hope, improved."

Though Parr attacked Hurd with a pitiless storm of detraction in the *Preface*, that he had really a high opinion of him is sufficiently evident from the following conversation which took place between the Prince of Wales and Dr Parr, at the table of the Duke of Norfolk, in the presence of Mr Fox, Mr Sheridan, Lord Erskine, and a large party of distinguished persons. Since, as De Quincey says, disputing with a Prince of Wales is something rarer even than waltzing with a Lord Chancellor or smoking a cigar with the Pope, the discussion may not be uninteresting. The name of the Archbishop of York, who was then in a declining state of health, having been alluded to, the Prince observed: "I esteem Markham a much wiser, greater, and more learned man than Hurd, and you will allow me to be a judge, for they were both my preceptors." "Sir," said Parr, "is it your Royal Highness' pleasure that I should enter upon the topic of their comparative merits as a subject of discussion?" "Yes," said the Prince. "Then, sir," said Parr, "I differ entirely from your Royal Highness in opinion."

"As I knew them both so intimately," replied the Prince, "you will not deny that I had the power of more accurately appreciating their respective merits than you can have had. In their manner of teaching you may judge of my estimation of Markham's superiority—his natural dignity and authority, compared with the Bishop of Worcester's smoothness and softness, and I now add, with proper submission to your authority on such a subject, his experience as a schoolmaster, and his better scholarship." "Sir," said Parr, "your Royal Highness began this conversation, and if you permit it to go on, must tolerate a very different inference." "Go on," said the Prince, "I declare that Markham understood Greek better than Hurd; for when I read Homer and hesitated about a word, Markham immediately explained it, and then we went on; but when I hesitated with Hurd, he always referred me to the Dictionary; I therefore conclude he wanted to be informed himself." "Sir," replied Parr, "I venture to differ from your Royal Highness' conclusion. I am myself a schoolmaster, and I think that Dr Hurd pursued the right method, and that Dr Markham failed in his duty. Hurd desired your Royal Highness to find the word in the lexicon, not because he did not know it, but because he wished you to find by search, and learn it thoroughly. Dr Hurd was not eminent as a scholar, but it is not likely that he would have presumed to teach your Royal Highness without knowing the lesson himself." "Have you changed your opinion of Dr Hurd?" exclaimed the Prince; "I have read a work in which you attacked him fiercely." "Yes, sir, I attacked him on one point, which I thought important to letters; and I summoned the whole force of my mind, and took every possible pains to do it well, for I consider Hurd to be a great man. He

is celebrated as such by foreign critics, who appreciate justly his wonderful acuteness, sagacity, and dexterity in doing what he has done with so small a stock of learning. There is no comparison, in my opinion, between Markham and Hurd as men of talents. Markham was a pompous schoolmaster. Hurd was a stiff and cold, but correct gentleman. Markham was at the head of a great school, then of a great college, and finally became an Archbishop. In all these stations he had trumpeters of his fame who called him great, though he published one Concio only, which has already sunk into oblivion. From a farm-house and village school, Hurd emerged the friend of Gray, and a circle of distinguished men. While fellow of a small college he sent out works praised by foreign critics, and not despised by our own scholars. He enriched his understanding by study, and sent from the obscurity of a country village a book, sir, which your royal father is said to have declared made him a bishop. He made himself unpopular in his own profession by defence of a fantastical system. He had decriers—he had no trumpeters; he was great in and by himself; and, perhaps, sir, a portion of that power and adroitness you have manifested in this debate may have been owing to him." Fox, when the Prince was gone, exclaimed in his high tone of voice, "He thought he had caught you, but he caught a Tartar."

When the troublous period of the French Revolution came on, Parr, as might be expected, took a warm interest in its progress, and, though condemning the excesses of its promoters, was not without considerable sympathy for the movement. At the time of the famous Birmingham riots in 1791, his house was threatened, and his library was removed from his house, in his absence, by Mrs Parr, to save it from fancied dangers. Parr

cordially detested the "Church and King" party as they called themselves. Once when this toast was proposed at a public dinner, he exclaimed: "I will not drink that toast, nor will I suffer it to be given in my presence. It was the toast of Jacobites, and it is the yell of incendiaries; it means a Church without the Gospel, and a King above the laws." Parr's conduct during the whole revolutionary crisis was marked by a moderation and prudence very rare in him. Hearing that the Dissenters of Birmingham, in 1792, were meditating a meeting in commemoration of the French Revolution, similar to that which had provoked the riots of the previous year, he wrote "A letter from Irenopolis to the Dissenters of Birmingham," dissuading them from their purpose. This tractate, which was written in a day, in six and a half hours, is one of the best and most judicious of Parr's writings. He had not time to overlay it with meretricious ornament; hence it happily wants the verbosity and magniloquence of which he was so foolishly fond.

The most pleasing feature in Parr's life is his thorough good-heartedness, his readiness to assist all those who needed assistance, worthy or unworthy; the closeness with which he clung to those to whom he was attached, through evil report and through good report. A striking example of this is afforded by his conduct towards Joseph Gerrald, a former pupil of his. Gerrald, a West Indian, after a strange and tumultuous career, joined the British convention in 1793, and was unanimously found guilty of sedition by a Scotch jury in 1794. In spite of all the efforts made in his behalf by his friends, he was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. When on shipboard he received the following tender-hearted letter from Parr. Many more of the same kind might be quoted, and no one can read such letters of Parr without understanding

partly why it was that, in spite of all his harshness and eccentricity, he attracted to himself such troops of friends who loved and reverenced him :—

"Dear Joseph,—I hear with indignation and horror that the severe sentence lately passed upon you in Scotland is shortly to be carried into execution; and remembering that I was once your master, that I have long been your friend, that I am your fellow-creature, made so by the hand of God—and that by every law of that religion, in the belief of which I hope to live and die, I ought to be your comforter—now, dear Joseph, I am *for the last time* writing to you. Oh! my friend, at this moment my heart sinks within me; and with a wish to say ten thousand things, I am hardly able to say one. But you shall not leave this land without one affectionate, one sincere, one solemn farewell. Joseph, before we meet again that bosom which now throbs for you, that tongue which dictates, will be laid in the cold grave. Be it so. Yet, my dear friend, I must cherish the hope that death is not the end of such a being as man. No Joseph, no, there is a moral government going on, and in the course of it our afflictions will cease, and compensation will be made us, I trust, for all our unmerited sufferings. There is another world and a better; and in that world I pray God that I may see your face again. Bear up, I beseech you, against the hard and cruel oppression which the evil spirit of these days and your own want of discretion have brought upon you. Macintosh has informed me of that which is about to happen, and I have done all that I can in your favour. Let me conjure you, dear Joseph, to conduct yourself not only with firmness, but with calmness. Do not, do not, by turbulence in conversation or action, give your enemies occasion to make the cup of misery more bitter. Reflect

seriously on your past life, and review many of the opinions which you have unfortunately taken up, and which you know, from experience, have little tended to make you a happier or a better man. I do not mean, Joseph, to reproach you; no, such an intention, at such a crisis, is, and ought to be, very far from my heart; but I do mean to advise you, and excite you to such a use of your talents as may console you under the sorrows of this life, and prepare you effectually for what is to follow. I will send you a few books in addition to other matters; they will cheer you in the dreary hours you have to pass in that forlorn spot to which the inhuman governors of this land are about to send you.

"Some time ago I saw your dear boy, and depend upon it that, for his sake and your own, I will show him every kindness in my power. I shall often think of you; yes, Joseph, and there are moments too in which I shall pray for you. Farewell, dear Joseph Gerrald, and believe me, your most unfeigned and afflicted friend,—S. PARR."

The year 1795 beholds Dr Parr once more engaged in controversy. In 1791 died his faithful friend Henry Homer. Along with Dr Combe, he had been engaged in editing a variorum edition of "Horace," in the preparation of which he received a considerable amount of assistance from Parr. The book was completed by Combe, and published after Homer's death. When it came out the public were informed, by a memorandum in the "British Critic," that Dr Parr had no hand in the notes to the new edition. Then followed in the same journal a series of severe animadversions upon the work. Combe, not unnaturally indignant at this treatment from Parr, who had before encouraged him in his task, published in reply a pamphlet entitled "A Statement of the Facts relative to the Behaviour of the Rev. Dr Parr to

the late Mr Homer and Dr Combe, in order to point out the source, falsehood, and malignity of Dr Parr's attack in the 'British Critic' on the character of Dr Combe," in which he accuses Parr, among other things, of inhumanity to Homer, and attention to his own pocket. These charges, as might be expected, Parr conclusively refuted in a pamphlet entitled "Remarks on the Statement of Dr Charles Combe, by an occasional writer in the 'British Critic.'" Yet his conduct in writing as he did about an edition of "Horace" which he had certainly encouraged at the outset, does not appear to be justifiable, and Combe had good reason for complaint, although he weakened his case by resorting to false accusations. What was Parr's motive for acting as he did in this matter does not seem very evident. Probably he thought he had not been courted with sufficient deference by Combe. This appears pretty certain from the following passage:—"While we commend Dr Combe for what he has done in the way of dedication, we must not conceal from our readers what Mr Homer intended to do. If that judicious and diligent scholar had been living, the illustrious names of Mr Wyndham and Mr Burke would have adorned this page, in which we now find the venerable name of Lord Mansfield; and the dedication would have been written by a person the whole force of whose mind would have been exerted upon such an occasion, and whose advice, during the earlier stages of this publication, was repeatedly asked and generally followed by Mr Henry Homer."

1796 is a year which Parr must have looked back to with little pleasure. With many other men of eminence, he was then completely hoaxed by the famous Ireland forgeries. He was the first to sign the famous confession of faith, that "We, whose names are hereunto subscribed,

have, in the presence and by the favour of Mr Ireland, inspected the Shakespeare Papers, and are convinced of their authenticity." Among those who signed were Valpy, Pye the poet laureate, and James Boswell, who, on his arrival at Ireland's house, continued his examination of the papers for a considerable time, constantly speaking in favour of the internal as well as external proofs of the validity of the manuscripts. "At length, finding himself rather thirsty, he requested a tumbler of warm brandy and water; which, having nearly finished, he then redoubled his praises of the manuscripts; and at length, arising from his chair, made use of the following expression: 'Well, I shall now die contented, since I have lived to witness the present day.' Mr Boswell, then kneeling down before a volume containing a portion of the papers, continued: 'I now kiss the invaluable relics of our bard, and thanks to God that I have lived to see them!'" Equally ridiculous was the behaviour of Warton and Parr about "Shakespeare's Profession of Faith," a whining ridiculous rhapsody composed by Ireland. From Ireland's confession the following extracts are given by Barker. Literary history affords few more amusing passages. "Of the persons who visited Mr Samuel Ireland when the manuscripts were not very voluminous, Dr Warton and Parr were among the most conspicuous. On their arrival Mr Ireland was alone in his study to receive them; but, by the desire of the visitants, I was shortly after summoned before them to answer interrogatories. I confess I had never before felt so much terror, and would almost have bartered my life to evade the meeting. There was, however, no alternative, and I was under the necessity of appearing before them. Having replied to their several questionings as to the discovery of the manuscripts and the secretion of the gentleman's

name, one of these two inspectors of the manuscripts addressed me, saying, 'Well, young man, the public will have just cause to admire you for the research you have made, which will afford so much gratification to the literary world.' To this panegyric I bowed my head and remained silent.

"While Mr Ireland read aloud the Profession of Faith, Drs Parr and Warton remained silent, paying infinite attention to every syllable that was pronounced; while I continued immovable, awaiting to hear their dreaded opinion. This effusion being ended, one of the above gentlemen (whom, as far as my recollection can recal the circumstance, I believe to have been Dr Parr), thus addressed himself to Mr Ireland, 'Sir, we have very fine passages in our Church service, and our Liturgy abounds with beauties; but here, Sir, here is a man who has distanced us all.' When I heard these words pronounced I could scarcely credit my own senses; and such was the effect they produced on me, that I knew not whether to smile or not. I was, however, very forcibly struck with the encomium; and shortly after left the study, ruminating on the praise which had been unconsciously lavished by a person so avowedly erudite, on the unstudied production of one so green in years as myself."

As was natural, Parr was much ashamed of his conduct in this matter afterwards. In his "Bibliotheca Parriana" he speaks of the volume containing the forged papers as "a great and impudent forgery," adding, "Ireland told a lie when he imputed to me the very words which Joseph Warton used the morning I called on Ireland, and was inclined to admit the possibility of genuineness in his papers. In my subsequent conversation I told him my change of opinion. But I thought it not worth while to dispute in print with a detected impostor."

It seems pretty evident, however, from collateral circumstances, that Ireland's account is substantially correct.

In 1800 Dr Parr was appointed to preach the Spital Sermon. One cannot but be sorry for the Court of Aldermen who were compelled to listen for two hours to a discourse on the metaphysics of benevolence. No wonder though we are told that they were "not quite exempt from some manifestations of restlessness." The sermon when printed, consisted of fifty-one large octavo pages, and to it were added two hundred and twelve pages of notes!

The Spital Sermon is perhaps better known, by name at any rate, than any of Parr's works, owing to the fact that it forms the subject of Sydney Smith's first article in the *Edinburgh Review*. This article is as clever and caustic as any of Sydney Smith's writings; but it is not only clever and caustic — in our opinion it conveys a thoroughly accurate notion of the work reviewed. "Whoever," he writes, "has had the good fortune to see Dr Parr's wig, must have observed that while it trespasses a little on the orthodox magnitude of perukes in the interior parts, it scorns even Episcopal limits behind, and swells out into boundless convexity of friz, the *μεγαθαυμα* of barbers, and the terror of the literary world. After the manner of his wig, the Doctor has constructed his sermon, giving us a discourse of no common length, and subjoining an immeasurable mass of notes, which appear to concern every learned thing, every learned man, and almost every unlearned man from the beginning of the world." What he says about the style of the sermon applies with almost equal force to all Parr's writings. "The style is such as to give a general impression of heaviness to the whole sermon. The Doctor is never simple and natural for a single instant. Every-

thing smells of the rhetorician. He never appears to forget himself or to be hurried by his subject into obvious language. Every expression seems to be the result of artifice and intention; and as to the worthy dedicatees, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, unless the sermon be *done into English by a person of honour*, they may perhaps be flattered by the Doctor's politeness, but they can never be much edified by his meaning. Dr Parr seems to think that eloquence consists, not in an exuberance of beautiful images, not in simple and sublime conceptions, not in the feelings of the passions; but in a studious arrangement of sonorous, exotic, and sesquipedal words: a very ancient error, which corrupts the style of young, and wearies the patience of sensible men. In some of his combinations of words the Doctor is singularly unhappy. We have *the din of superficial cavillers*, the *prancings of giddy ostentation, fluttering vanity, hissing scorn, dank clod*, etc., etc., etc. On page 16, Dr Parr, in speaking of the indentures of the hospital, a subject, as we should have thought, little calculated for rhetorical panegyric, says of them:—'If the writer of whom I am speaking had perused, as I have, your indentures and your rules, he would have found in them seriousness without austerity, earnestness without extravagance, good sense without the trickeries of art, good language without the trappings of rhetoric, and the firmness of conscious worth rather than the prancings of giddy ostentation.'

"The latter member of this éloge would not be wholly unintelligible if applied to a spirited coach horse; but we have never yet witnessed the phenomenon of a *prancing indenture*."

Nowhere is the extent of Parr's erudition so clearly shown as in the notes to the "Spital Sermon;" it is no

exaggeration when Sydney Smith says that they relate to almost every learned thing and every learned man from the beginning of the world. The preface to "Bellenden," indeed, is a more convincing proof of his thorough mastery over Latin Idiom, but it gives no idea of the compass of his learning. Whatever else the opponents of Parr in his lifetime alleged against him, none ever cast a slur upon his scholarship; he was universally acknowledged to be an extremely erudite man. Even Sydney Smith calls him "by far the most learned man of his day," and this, too, at a time when, be it remembered, Porson's reputation was at its height. Yet Parr has left no work behind him at all comparable to Porson's labours on the text of Euripides. The "Four Plays" were an era in the history of scholarship; it may be greatly doubted whether Parr ever made any original contribution to the sum of classical learning, A laborious and painstaking scholar he unquestionably was, he had dug deep in the mines of classical learning, he had pored over musty folios and moth-eaten manuscripts; what had been done by other scholars he knew well, and could, when he chose, retail it very effectively, but he was not an original scholar any more than he was an original thinker—in short, he had not that *genius* for scholarship of which both Bentley and Porson possessed so much, he had not that fine critical instinct which cannot be attained save by laborious study, but which, nevertheless, no amount of study can produce. His erudition, such as it was, is scattered through the notes to his numerous works and his letters to his friends, so that it can with difficulty be ascertained what he actually did accomplish. If he had devoted himself to some great work, if, for example, instead of showing how badly an edition of Horace had been done, he had himself published an

edition of Horace, he might have left some enduring memorial of his scholarship behind him. As it is, his fame as a scholar is being rapidly forgotten. Indeed, till one has read a good deal about Parr, and has observed how wide and influential his range of acquaintances was, one has some difficulty in realising what way it was that his reputation as a man of learning was so widespread in his lifetime.

Parr's own estimate of his scholarship was of the highest. "Shepherd," he said to one of his friends, "the age of great scholars is past. I am the only one now remaining of that race of men who could sit down with pleasure to devour a folio." He admitted Porson's superiority to himself in the knowledge of Attic Greek, but of Attic Greek only. "Porson," he once observed to a friend with whom he was out riding, "has more Greek, but no man's horse, John, carries more Latin than mine." In this opinion he was probably correct. De Quincey, whose estimate of Parr is by far too disparaging, is constrained to admit that, as a master of Latinity, and pretty generally as a Latin scholar, Parr was the first man of his century. Nowhere did he show his powers of tasteful Latin composition more than in his epitaphs. By sorrowing friends he was very often applied to for his services in this way, and rarely was any application declined. To this subject he appears to have devoted attention from a very early period, and throughout all his life it continued one of his favourite studies. "You know, Edward," he writes to Maltby, "that my taste compels me to disapprove of the rhetorical and pompous style in which modern epitaphs are written; and it is no less provoking than true, that in Westminster Abbey I do not know one inscription that is founded upon the models of antiquity; and even in Oxford I have met

only with one which resembles them. In the Abbey, there are a few attempts at conciseness, but then it is conciseness without simplicity, and there is an apparent offensive effort to grasp some vast and pompous thought into a small compass of expression. What ought to be done in Latin by us is known to me, after a careful perusal of what has been done by the ancients; and my opinions are founded upon a diligent and critical inspection of what has been published by Sponius, &c., &c." Having studied the subject so deeply he had a calm confidence in the soundness of his own judgment on questions relating to it, and bore with impatience the criticisms to which his epitaphs were sometimes subjected. He has had one appreciative critic at all events. De Quincey devotes several pages to the consideration of Parr's epitaphs, concluding with the following eulogium:—"These great laws of feeling in this difficult and delicate department of composition, are obeyed with more rigour in the epitaphs of Dr Parr than perhaps anywhere else. He was himself too deeply sensible of human frailty, and he looked up to a moral governor of the world with reverence too habitual, to have allowed himself in rash or intemperate thoughts, when brought upon any ground so nearly allied to his sacred functions. And, with regard to the expressions of his thoughts, except to the extent of a single word, as for instance, *velificari*, in which the metaphorical application has almost obliterated the original meaning—we remember nothing figurative, nothing too gay, nothing luxuriant—all is chaste, all classical, all suited to the solemnity of the case. Had Dr Parr, therefore, written under the additional restraints of verse, and had he oftener achieved a distinguished success in the pathetic, as an artist in Monumental Inscriptions, we must have *been compelled* to place him in the very highest class."

Dr Parr's last literary work of importance was "Characters of the late Charles James Fox, selected and in part written by Philopatris Varvicensis," which appeared in 1809. This work consists of extracts relating to Mr Fox, selected from various public journals, along with an epistle addressed to Mr Coke by the editor, containing a eulogium on the character of that great statesman. "I have not," Parr writes in a letter to a friend, "written the life of Mr Fox, I say nothing of his parentage, education, or connections; nor do I enter into any detail of his measures. But I have laid open his mind. I have selected the best characters written of him after his death, and then comes my own view of him, *which as you will readily believe, is copious, discriminating, and animated.* I have thrown some of the matter into the more convenient form of notes. I have added two notes, which are not sufficient to form a pamphlet. One is upon a subject most important in itself, and which becomes more pertinent on this occasion, as it is the last on which I had any serious conversation with Mr Fox. The other contains an elaborate and grave vindication of his memory from a malicious insinuation that he was an advocate for the assassination of European sovereigns, and an open charge that he was a relentless bigot in the cause of infidelity." Fox, whose amiable character made him loved by all who knew him, had always been a warm friend to Parr, and it is probable that if the Government of which he was a member had continued long in power, he would have made him a bishop. At any rate this was Parr's own opinion, and perhaps he may have been right, but there is no doubt but that from various causes he was extremely unpopular with his own order, and that any Government which had promoted him to such high ecclesiastical dignity, would have incurred a great deal of

clerical odium. Parr in a very marked degree was what Cobbet called "a political parson." To Whig principles he was always a steady and extremely bigoted adherent, although, strange to say, his father had been a vehement Tory. We have seen that his first great work, the Preface to Bellenden, was a eulogium on the great Whig statesmen of the day. In like manner his last work of consequence was devoted to a similar end. He was a staunch defender of the unfortunate Queen Caroline, and when, on the death of the king, her name was ordered to be erased from the Liturgy, he recorded his sentiments on that subject in the prayer book of Hatton Church in the following terms :—

"Numerous and weighty are the reasons which induce me deliberately and solemnly to record in the prayer-book of my parish the following particulars. With deep and unfeigned sorrow I have read in the *London Gazette*," &c.

"It is my duty as a subject, and as an Ecclesiastic, to read what is prescribed by my sovereign as head of the Church of England. But it is not my duty to express my approbation as well as to yield obedience, when my feelings as a man, and my principles as a Christian, compel me to disapprove and deplore. If the person who, for many years, was prayed for as Princess of Wales, has not ceased to be the wife of the Royal Personage who was called Prince of Wales, most assuredly she becomes Queen when he becomes King; and Queen she must remain, till by some judicial process her conjugal relation to our legitimate Sovereign be authoritatively dissolved."

This was a very characteristic act of Parr. He was the sort of political partizan which makes wise party leaders pray that they may be delivered from their friends.

It is amusing to notice how all the great Whig statesmen with whom he corresponded endeavour in their letters to him to steer clear of politics, and discuss such neutral matters as points of classical criticism, etc.

We now return to Dr Parr's personal history. In 1805 his favourite daughter Catherine died of consumption, and in 1810 Mrs Parr fell a victim to the same insidious disease. The character of this lady has been already indicated. "Her sarcasms," says Dr Johnstone, "often wounded Parr's spirit, her want of temper (*good* temper, he means—of the other kind she possessed ample abundance) diminished his domestic happiness, and her bitter and false representations sometimes tended to injure his fame. It is due to the purity of his life and conversation that I say thus much; for many still survive who might repeat to his disadvantage the bitter invective, the dark insinuation, the sly complaint that were too often heard in former times at Hatton." To such a height did the domestic squabble of Parr and his wife sometimes rise, that De Quincey relates that on one occasion Parr, rising up from the table in the middle of a fierce dispute with Mrs Parr, took a carving knife, and applying it to a portrait hanging upon the wall, drew it sharply across the jugular, and cut the throat of the portrait from ear to ear, thus murdering her in effigy.

The story of the events connected with the marriage of Parr's eldest daughter, Sarah, forms quite a romance. In 1796, John, the eldest son of Mr Wynne, a gentleman of property who resided in Denbighshire, was placed under the care of Dr Parr at Hatton. He became attached to Sarah Parr, and, some way or other, his attachment became known to his family during the Christmas holidays. On his return to Hatton in February, it became obvious to Mrs Parr also, who accordingly communicated

with Mrs Wynne on the subject. The result was, that John Wynne was sent home in February, but soon returned after having been duly cautioned "to guard against those susceptibilities and facilities which had shown themselves in him from his earliest infancy." Not to enter minutely into details, the end of the affair was, that the young couple eloped to Gretna Green and got married there. When they returned to Hatton, Parr declined to receive them, and they were obliged to take refuge in a farm house in the neighbourhood. Wynne's father firmly avowed his intention of cutting his son off with a shilling. Parr soon relented, and after a few years Mr Wynne did the same, and, on his death, his son succeeded to the estate. But the worst was yet to come. Dissensions arose between the pair, and at length a separation took place. Mrs Wynne's youngest child remained with her, but her two other children were not permitted to visit her even on her deathbed. She died at Hatton in 1810. She appears to have been possessed of considerable talents, as well as of a good many very unamiable qualities. "Those who remember Mrs Wynne," says Dr Johnstone, "cannot fail to recollect that her wit had often too keen an edge, and that she often viewed things through a coloured and partial medium, and represented them accordingly in sarcastic and bitter terms." Parr's many afflictions at this time depressed him considerably. "My domestic sorrows," he writes to Dr Burney, a little before Mrs Wynne's death, "weigh me quite down, but I shall summon all my courage, and in truth, dear Sir, I have a very deep and serious sense of the duties which I owe to my grandchildren as their protector. I had reckoned much on the judicious and affectionate aid they and their poor mother would have had from Mrs Parr. But these hopes are no more. I have long learned

to value life chiefly as a sort of trust reposed in us by the Almighty for promoting the good of His creatures, and as a state of discipline preparatory to a nobler sphere of agency. This conviction is firmly seated in my mind; it does not weaken any of the feelings which are natural to the human heart. No, Charles, but it invigorates them, and purifies them, and exalts them from the rank of weaknesses into incentives to virtue; and when mingled with reflection, intention, and active exercise, raises the soul of man to the most becoming and animating piety."

There is little to tell about the closing years of Parr's life. It is pleasing to find that the increased value of his stall at St Paul's gave him a handsome annual income during the latter part of his life. He was now enabled to gratify one of the ambitions of his youth. He set up a coach and four, and amused himself and others by driving about the neighbourhood with it in great state. In 1816 he married again, the object of his choice being Miss Eyre, the sister of his friend, the Rev. James Eyre. This second marriage appears to have been a happy one, Mrs Parr doing all for her husband that a faithful wife could do. Another circumstance that tended to make the close of Parr's life brighter was his reconciliation to his grandchildren, which occurred upon the second marriage of their father, when they sought refuge at Hatton, and were received with overflowing kindness.

Dr Parr expired full of years, and full of honours, on the 6th of March 1825. He died in peace, surrounded by all the friends and relatives whom he best loved. The closing scene cannot be better described than in the words of Dr Johnstone. "During fifty days of suffering, and during which time he was more helpless than the newborn babe, it needs no great flight of imagination to conceive that his fortitude and magnanimity were tried

to the utmost. Except, indeed, when his position was obliged to be moved, and the cry of anguish could not be repressed, he never repined, he never complained. Ejaculations of pious hope, and unfeigned confidence, frequently broke from him in murmurs of thankfulness or prayer, and his countenance, except when he was tortured with pain, had that pleasing expression which usually attended his calm and more agreeable conversations. On Sunday, the 6th March, the approach of death became more evident, the pulsation of the artery at the wrist was imperceptible, yet he awoke conscious, spoke to Mrs Lynes, and knew those about him. Gratefully affected by the attention I endeavoured to show him, he appeared, from his attitude, repeatedly to bless me, and with the utmost emphasis of his dying voice, saluted me as his *most* dear friend. The expression of his countenance during the greater part of the day, was almost divine. He could take no food, yet with short intervals of delirium, had the most complete possession of his intellect. Not a murmur of impatience escaped him; except the words of kindness he whispered to those about him, all he uttered was devotional; and such was his frame of mind till five minutes before his death. He then became insensible, and departed by an inaudible expiration at six in the afternoon."

He was buried at Hatton on the 14th of March. In compliance with Parr's own request, his old and faithful friend Dr Butler preached the funeral sermon. He performed his difficult task well and gracefully, not altogether passing over Parr's faults, but showing how greatly they were counterbalanced by his virtues.

About Dr Parr's personal appearance and habits, much might be written. The following graphic sketch of him by De Quincey, if somewhat too much of a caricature

seems in its main features to be confirmed by what we know of Parr otherwise.* He had been prepared to expect in Dr Parr a huge carcass of a man, fourteen stone at the least. "Even his style, pursy and bloated, and his sesquipedalian words, all warranted the same conclusion. Hence, then, our surprise and the perplexity we have recorded, when the door opened, and a little man in a buz wig, cut his way through the company, and made for a fauteuil standing opposite to the fire. Into this he *lunged*, and then forthwith without preface or apology, began to open his talk upon us. Here arose a new marvel and a greater. If we had been scandalised at Dr Parr's want of thews and bulk, conditions so indispensable for enacting the part of Samuel Johnson, much more, and with better reason, were we now petrified, with his voice, utterance, gestures, and demeanour. Conceive, reader, by way of counterpoise to the fine enunciation of Dr Johnson, an infantine lisp—the worst we ever heard, from the lips of a man above sixty, and accompanied with all sorts of ridiculous grimaces and little stage gesticulations. As he sat in his chair, turning alternately to the right and to the left, that he might dispense his edification in equal proportions among us, he seemed the very image of a little gossiping French Abbé.

* Since, perhaps, most people who know anything about Parr, have derived their knowledge of him from De Quincey, it is but right to say that his narrative is far from conveying an accurate idea of Parr. Robert Landor, in a letter to Mr Forster, the biographer of his brother, Walter Savage Landor, who was a great friend of Parr's, says truly that "If Mr De Quincey had been desirous to show us how far it might be possible to convey the most false and injurious notions of a man in language which no one could contradict, which said nothing but the truth, he could hardly have succeeded better. What he has written is very true, and very false; but there are some old people, like myself, who may wish that the mixture had been less skilfully malicious and a great deal more honest."

"Yet all that we have mentioned was, and seemed to be, a trifle compared with the infinite pettiness of the matter. Nothing did he utter but little shreds of calumnious tattle—the most ineffably silly and frivolous of all that was then circulating in the Whig *salons* of London against the Regent. He began precisely in these words: 'Oh! I shall tell you' (laying a stress upon the word *shall*, which still further aided the resemblance to a Frenchman), 'a-sto-hee' (lispingly for *story*) 'about the Pince Thegent' (such was his nearest approximation to *Prince Regent*). 'Oh, the Pince Thegent, the Pince Thegent—what a sad, sad man he has turned out! But you *shall* hear. Oh, what a Pince! what a Thegent!—what a sad Pince Thegent!" And so the old babbler went on, sometimes wringing his little hands in lamentation, sometimes flourishing them with French grimaces and shrugs of shoulders, sometimes expanding and contracting his fingers like a fan. After an hour's twaddle of the lowest and most scandalous description, suddenly he rose, and hopped out of the room, exclaiming all the way, 'Oh! what a Pince, oh, what a Thegent,—did anybody ever hear of such a sad Pince, such a sad Thegent, such a sad, sad, Pince Thegent. Oh, what a Pince,'" &c. Alluding to Parr's defective articulation and illegible handwriting, Lord Holland used to say that it was most unfortunate for a man so full of learning and information as Dr Parr, that he could not easily communicate his knowledge; for when he spoke, nobody could make out what he said, and when he wrote, nobody could read his handwriting. Owing to that merciful dispensation of Providence which prevents us from seeing ourselves as others see us, Parr was rather proud of his personal appearance than otherwise, and occasionally devoted considerable attention to it. The main object

of his solicitude was his wigs, about which several anxious letters as to their safe transmission are to be found, written to his friend John Bartlam. None of the portraits of him were to his satisfaction. "All the artists," said he, "to whom I have sat, fail in one feature—none of them give me my peculiar ferocity." He had a notion that his eye possessed some peculiar power, so that, when he stared at any one whom he wished to inspire with awe for him, he immediately succeeded in his object. "I inflicted my eye on him," was his phrase in such cases. How unutterably ridiculous all this is can only be appreciated by those who have looked at the portraits of Parr given in Dr Johnstone's edition of his works.

Like the great man whom he imitated in most respects to the best of his ability—Dr Johnson—Parr was a lover of good living. His biographer devotes the greater part of two pages to justify him in this, which is entirely a work of supererogation, as all sensible men will at once say he was right. His love for tobacco was, however, carried to an excess. He smoked in season and out of season. When he visited any house he expected a pipe to be prepared for him *instanter*, and if this was not done, he never forgot the injury. "To the lady of the house," says Dr Johnstone, "though a ceremonious, Dr Parr was sometimes a troublesome guest. When he was thwarted or attacked, or in company of those he disliked or suspected, he certainly had the power of being most exquisitely disagreeable."

Among Parr's many peculiarities was his extraordinary fondness for church bells. He was an expert campanologist, and loved to descant upon his favourite topic. He erected a fine peal of bells at Hatton, to obtain subscriptions for which, he says in one of his letters, "I have been importunate and almost imprudent in my ap-

plications." He once entertained a notion of writing a book on campanology. Doubtless, if he had done so, he would have mentioned, with lurking sympathy, a book *De Coelesti Statu*, printed in 1618, which employs 426 pages to prove that the principal employment of the blest in heaven will be the continual ringing of bells!

Of Parr's intellectual characteristics, vanity was perhaps the most prominent. If we were to extract from his letters all the passages where he praises himself, they would occupy at least as many pages as this biography. "Doctor," said his friend Shepherd to him one day, "the public are aware of the depth and the extent of your erudition, and many of us have wondered that you were never made a Bishop." "Aye, sir," replied he with much animation, "I think I have stuff in me to make a Bishop of. But, sir, I have barred my promotion by my independent spirit. Sir, I would always speak my mind. I burnt my quarters with the old gentleman (George III.) by loudly protesting against that wicked American war, and with the young gentleman (George IV.) I have ruined myself by taking part with his much-injured wife. If I had been promoted to the Bench, sir, I would have restricted myself to my episcopal duties—I would have looked well to my clergy—and would have been very civil to you Non-cons. Sir, I would have often invited them to my table, and would have rubbed off their rust and their asperities. But I would have been sparing of my speech in the House of Lords. The less we say there, sir, the better. A prating bishop, sir, is much disliked." His friend Mr Street relates in the *Parriana:* "Soon after this I went with him to the House of Commons. Sir James Mackintosh, I think, went with him. The debate was of great importance. The Doctor sat in the side gallery, from

where he could see and be seen by the leading members of the opposition. Mr Fox rose and spoke. The Doctor's eyes sparkled with animation. As Mr Fox proceeded, the Doctor grew more animated, and at last rose as if with the intention of speaking. He was reminded of the impropriety, and immediately sat down. After Mr Fox had concluded he exclaimed: 'Had I followed any other profession, I might have been sitting by the side of that illustrious statesman; I should have had all his powers of argument, all Erskine's eloquence, and all Hargrave's law.'" Anecdotes such as these might be given in abundance, but enough is as good as a feast. "Parr was rather fitted for the law than the church," says Sydney Smith, "and would have been a more considerable man if he had been more knocked about among his equals. He lived among country gentlemen and clergymen, who flattered and feared him." Certainly a considerable number of his friends appear to have been toadies of the first water.

Like a great many other people, Parr prided himself more upon what he might have done than upon what he actually did accomplish. He was constantly forming brilliant projects which came to nothing. One of these was a life of Dr Johnson. Johnson met Parr once at least, and appears to have formed a not unfavourable estimate of him. "Parr," he said, "is a fair man; I do not know when I have had an occasion for such free controversy. A life of Dr Johnson by Parr would have been a literary curiosity of the greatest interest. What a difference there would have been between the sesquipedalian words and ponderous magniloquence of Parr, and the free and genial style of Boswell's great narrative! Indeed, though Parr's style was often praised in his lifetime, it has almost all the faults that a style can have.

He never uses a short word where it is possible to use a long one. He never makes a simple statement in simple language, but envelopes the most common-place thoughts in a cloud of turgid diction equally ridiculous and obscure. His style was doubtless formed upon the model of Johnson, but he writes much more Johnsonese than Johnson himself ever did. In Johnson's writings, if the form the thoughts are expressed in is occasionally bad, the thoughts themselves are almost always worth noticing. In Parr's writings, only too often we have a worthless thought expressed in worthless language. Not that there are not some passages in Parr's works which reward the reader who patiently looks for them, but they are but as oases in the desert, all around is a sandy plain of common-place. "What, meanwhile must be the condition of an era, when the highest advantages then become perverted into drawbacks; when, if you take two men of genius, and put the one between the handles of the plough, and mount the other between the painted coronets of a coach and four, and bid them both move along, the former shall arrive a Burns, the latter a Byron; two men of talent, and put the one into a printers' chapel, full of lamp black, tyrannous usage, hard toil, and the other into Oxford [Cambridge it should have been] Universities, with lexicons and libraries, and hired expositors, and sumptuous endowments, the former shall come out a Dr Franklin, the latter a Dr Parr!" Thus writes Thomas Carlyle, and the passage is a striking illustration of his peculiar faculty for implying a good deal more than he actually expresses. Parr's stores of erudition were often a curse to him rather than a blessing —he was buried beneath the weight of his own ornaments.

But though Dr Parr does not always inspire respect, we

cannot take leave of him without a feeling of kindness. Though often a wrong-headed, he was always a thoroughly conscientious man, doing what he believed to be right, with a sublime indifference to worldly considerations. He was also an extremely kind-hearted man, poverty and distress were always the surest recommendations to his favour, he was the last man to desert a friend in the hour of need, and he was the last man to turn a deaf ear to an enemy who had wronged him, but who had repented and asked forgiveness. If what Parr accomplished himself in scholarship is of comparatively little importance, it is to be remembered that the advice and aid he so freely bestowed upon others, often enabled them to accomplish what they could not otherwise have done. The number of distinguished and excellent men who were his constant friends and who sincerely mourned his death, is a sufficient proof, that in spite of all his oddities and imperfections, Samuel Parr was at bottom a man of genuine worth and of genuine ability.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THOMAS RUDDIMAN — SIR WILLIAM JONES — DR ALEXANDER MURRAY — ALEXANDER ADAM — JAMES MELVIN — BISHOP BLOMFIELD.



THOUGH Scotland has not produced so many great scholars as England, though it cannot boast of a Bentley or a Porson, and of very few even in the same rank as Dawes or Elmsley, yet in the number of learned men who have been entirely the architects of their own fortune, who, born in the deepest poverty, have acquired erudition by their own unremitting exertions, Scotland is considerably ahead of the sister kingdom. For this various reasons might be given. The excellence of the instruction afforded by the parish schools, placing learning within the reach of the meanest rustic, is one; and the cheapness of the Scotch universities compared to the English, is another. The early history of

THOMAS RUDDIMAN,

the greatest Latinist of his time, probably the greatest since Buchanan, is a typical one. Though few, certainly, have achieved so distinguished a success, many narratives of the same kind might be told, of men sprung from as lowly an origin, who, having by dint of steady perseverance acquired learning, have succeeded in breaking their birth's invidious bar, and have risen to honour and affluence.

Ruddiman was born in October 1674, in the parish of Boyndie, Banffshire. His father was a respectable farmer, whose loyalty was of a kind quite extinct now-a-days. On hearing of the death of that model monarch,

Charles II., he was so affected as to burst into tears. Doubtless he was careful to inculcate in his son that veneration for the divine right of kings which he himself entertained, and the lesson was well learnt, for Ruddiman clung fast to the same principles throughout life. He was sent to the parish school of Boyndie, where he was initiated in the elements of Latin, and advanced so rapidly as to quickly outstrip all his fellows. The first book that charmed his fancy was the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid, who, during the rest of his life, was his favourite poet. Ruddiman seems to have been born with a vocation for scholarship, and when about the age of sixteen, having now, it is probable, exhausted the stores of his master's learning, he began to think of going to the University of Aberdeen, where, he had heard, there were annually bursaries awarded for proficiency in classical learning. To Aberdeen he resolved to go, but his father opposed his inclination, thinking him too young. However, Ruddiman was not to be baffled. Confiding his secret to no one but his sister, who slipped a guinea into his pocket, he set out for Aberdeen. He had not gone very far when he unfortunately met with a company of gipsies, who robbed the poor lad of his coat, his shoes, his stockings, and his guinea. If Ruddiman had not been of a very courageous spirit, this misfortune would doubtless have utterly discomfited him, but the young enthusiast manfully pressed on, and, on reaching Aberdeen, was rewarded for his efforts by obtaining the first bursary. His father, in the meantime, having heard where his son had gone, hastened after him, and reached Aberdeen in time to congratulate him upon his distinguished success. After studying at King's College for four years, Ruddiman obtained the degree of Master of Arts, an honour of which he was extremely proud.

Soon after he was engaged by a Forfarshire gentleman to assist in the education of his son, in which situation he continued to study assiduously and advance his attainments in scholarship. After having held this office for about a year, he quitted it to become parish schoolmaster at Laurencekirk. It gives one a curious idea of the state of things in Scotland at the time, to learn that Ruddiman's emoluments while there amounted to about £11 per annum. For his removal from Laurencekirk, and his consequent advancement in life, he was indebted to one of these strange accidents which often exercise so much influence over our destinies. After he had been there for over three years, the celebrated Dr Pitcairne, who happened, owing to the inclemency of the weather, to be detained for a day in the village of Laurencekirk, asked his hostess whether she knew of anyone who would bear him company at dinner, and by his conversation help to divert the tedium of the evening. She replied that the schoolmaster, though a very modest man, was reported to have great learning, and would doubtless prove a suitable companion. Ruddiman was accordingly sent for, and so delighted was the doctor by his pleasing and learned conversation, that he invited him to Edinburgh, and promised him his patronage.

In the beginning of 1700 Ruddiman went to Edinburgh, and shortly afterwards was appointed assistant librarian of the Advocates' Library, at a salary of £8, 6s. 8d. per annum. What time he could spare from the often laborious duties of his office, he employed in teaching young gentlemen the Latin language, by which means, and by copying manuscripts, etc., he eked out as best he could his slender pittance. The situation of librarian must have been an eminently suitable one for Ruddiman, affording him, as it did, ample opportunities

for all kinds of literary research. So pleased wer employers with him, that when he had held the offi two years they made him a present of fifty pounds S equal to £4, 3s. 4d. We have very full informati to the various sums of money Ruddiman received, c to the fact that he noted them down in a pocket-l which was preserved after his death.

When Ruddiman's talents and learning became kı his assistance was often solicited by those who wer gaged in literary publications. His first employme this kind was as editor of a Latin historical work l Robert Sibbald. He also contributed his aid tc publication of Sir Robert Spottiswoode's "Practiqu the Law of Scotland." For these labours he rec respectively £3 and £5. Ruddiman had now a and a family, so he began to look out for some oc tion which might prove more remunerative than l ture seemed likely to be. Accordingly, in 1707, he menced book auctioneer, an occupation in whic appears to have been very successful. The same ye published an edition of Wilson's "De Animi Tranqui Dialogus," to which he prefixed a life of the au Soon after this he engaged in a more important wo edition of Gawin Douglas's Scottish translation o Æneid. This he corrected throughout, and enrich with a glossary which has been very highly comme besides adding, as is supposed, forty-two general for enabling the reader to understand the langua Douglas. For this work he received £8, 6s. 8d.

On a vacancy occurring in the rectorship o Dundee Grammar School in 1710, Ruddiman offered the appointment, but the Faculty of Advc were unwilling to lose the benefit of his services, a raised his salary to £30. In 1711 he assisted Bisho

in publishing a new edition of the works of Drummond of Hawthornden. In 1714 appeared the first edition of the work which was destined to make his name a household word to the schoolboys of several generations, his "Rudiments of the Latin Tongue," an excellent little manual, which was almost universally used in Scotch schools till quite recently. It passed through fifteen editions in the author's lifetime, and was translated into several foreign languages.

In 1715 there was printed at Edinburgh a magnificent folio edition of Buchanan's works in two volumes under the editorship of Ruddiman. What Ruddiman's political principles were has been already indicated—in almost every point they were directly the opposite of Buchanan's, so that, except for his profound acquaintance with Latin, he was not a very suitable man to select as editor. He warmly espoused the cause of Queen Mary, accusing Buchanan of gross ingratitude, and managed to raise against himself a host of enemies, whose hostility in one case took the formidable shape of a "Society of the Scholars of Edinburgh, to vindicate that incomparably learned and pious author from the Calumnie of Mr Thomas Ruddiman." Many works were written in refutation of his treatment of Buchanan's character, some of which deserve a passing notice. One of them was by Logan, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who is described as "a weak and illiterate man, but an obstinate polemic" —perhaps not an uncommon combination. Another was by Love, the schoolmaster of Dalkeith, who has been consigned to unenviable immortality by the graphic pen of Smollett, who satirises him in the beginning of "Roderick Random." But by far Ruddiman's most bitter assailant was James Man, master of an hospital at Aberdeen, who devoted a volume of over five hundred

pages to abuse him and vindicate Buchanan. This production was published in 1754, when Ruddiman had reached his eightieth year. The title is:—"A censure and examination of Mr Thomas Ruddiman's philological notes on the works of the great Buchanan, more particularly on the history of Scotland; in which also, most of the chronological and geographical, and many of the historical and political notes are taken into consideration. In a letter to a friend. Necessary for restoring the true readings, the graces and beauties, and for understanding the true meaning of a vast number of passages of Buchanan's writings, which have been so foully corrupted, so miserably defaced, so grossly perverted and misunderstood. Containing many curious particulars of his life, and a vindication of his character from many gross calumnies." Man's attack on Ruddiman is a "thing of sound and fury, signifying nothing," for with all his acuteness he was able to point out only twenty errors in the two folio volumes, and some of these even were very trifling. In two pamphlets which he published in reply, Ruddiman gained a complete victory over his antagonist, and drew up against him an account of four hundred and sixty-nine errors, under fourteen heads, of which the following are specimens: 1. Falsehoods and prevarications, twenty; 2. absurdities, sixty-nine; and 3. passages from classical authors which were misunderstood by Man, ten.

In 1715 Ruddiman started a printing office of his own, in company with his brother Walter, who had been regularly bred to the business. Some years after he was appointed printer to the University, which had long been the object of his ambition. It gives one a high idea of the state of learning in Scotland at this period, to think that at Edinburgh so many fine publications should have

been issued by Ruddiman, and that at Glasgow the Foulis Press should have sent forth productions still prized by book-lovers for the beauty and accuracy of their typography. Ruddiman well deserves to be ranked with those famous printers who were among the most active restorers of learning, with Aldus Manutius and Robert and Henry Stephens. The editions of classical authors that issued from his press were printed with great accuracy, and often exhibited new readings and emendations of punctuation in the highest degree creditable to the learning of the editor. The masterpiece of Ruddiman's press is his edition of Livy, printed in 1751, which Harwood declares to be the most accurate ever published, and which will bear favourable comparison with the famous Foulis edition of Horace, printed in 1744, the sheets of which, as is well known, were hung up in Glasgow University, and a reward offered to any one who could point out an error. This edition of Horace was long believed to be immaculate, but several inaccuracies have been detected in it.

In 1724 Ruddiman began to print the "Caledonian Mercury," and five years after became its proprietor. It was at first printed three times a week, on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, on a small quarto sheet of four pages, with two columns in each page, and fifty lines in each column. Like all similar productions at the time, it made no pretensions to be anything but a mere day chronicle of facts. When the rebellion broke out in 1745, the "Mercury" was looked on with much suspicion by the authorities, owing to the well-known political principles of the proprietor. Ruddiman sensibly refrained from taking any part in the Rebellion, and quietly employed himself in writing critical observations on Burman's edition of Lucan. His son, who was principal

manager of the "Mercury," having copied from an English paper a paragraph which was reckoned seditious, was imprisoned, and though his release was soon procured, it came too late, for the unfortunate young man had contracted a disease while in prison, and died soon after he came out.

In 1725 appeared the first part of Ruddiman's "Institutions of Latin Grammar." The second part, which treats of syntax, was published in 1731. At the time of its publication this was decidedly the best work of its kind in any language, and it is still thought worthy of respectful mention by scholars. A third part, on prosody, was written, but not published; "for," said the author, "the age has so little taste, that the sale would not cover the expense." In 1733 he printed "A Dissertation upon the way of teaching the Latin Tongue," a subject which he was eminently qualified to treat of, and regarding which he gives many sensible suggestions.

It is gratifying to learn that Ruddiman's labours were attended by more solid rewards than fame. In 1710 he had valued his effects at £24, 14s. 9d. In 1736 his wealth had increased to £1985, 6s. 3d. In his sixty-fifth year he resigned his share of the printing establishment to his son, allowing, however, his name to remain in the firm to continue its credit. His last literary labour was an introduction to Anderson's "Selectus Diplomatum et Numismatum Scotiæ Thesaurus." Early in 1752 he resigned his office of Librarian of the Advocates' Library, and was succeeded by the celebrated David Hume.

This excellent and talented man died in January 1757, at the ripe age of eighty-three, leaving behind him a fortune of £3000. His character seems in every way to have been a most exemplary one. Frugal, patient, industrious, he *richly* merited the success he gained. In person he was

of middle height, thin and straight, and had eyes remarkably piercing. On the whole Ruddiman strikes one as having really been one of the best men who ever lived. Even controversy was incapable of souring his nature. Though often treated with insolence by his opponents, he constantly refrained from treating them with scurrility, and when his old antagonist Love died, Ruddiman published a very favourable character of him in the "Caledonian Mercury." Men of this stamp are rare, and their memories should not be let die.

Perhaps, as a general rule, great linguists are apt to be over-rated. It is so shining an accomplishment to be able to talk in six or seven different tongues, that people forget that the mere knack of acquiring languages is in itself a very useless thing. Men like Cardinal Mezzofanti, who knew nearly every language in existence, often pass, as he did, profoundly useless lives, and are distinguished by no remarkable mental power save only memory. No doubt a strong memory is a very useful gift, but unless it be united with the faculties, it is apt to benefit no one but its owner. But when facility in acquiring languages is united with higher mental powers, it is a very valuable thing indeed. No better example of a man who was at once a great linguist and possessed great talents in other ways, could be given than

SIR WILLIAM JONES,

who, in his character, probably more nearly resembles the traditional Admirable Crichton than any man that ever lived.

He was born in London in the year 1746. His father, who was a teacher of mathematics, and was honoured with the friendship of Sir Isaac Newton, died when he was only three years of age, leaving him to the care of

his mother, a woman of singular virtues and accomp
ments. When her son applied to her for informatio
any subject, her constant answer was, "Read, and
will know," thus laying the foundation of those habi
minute and painstaking inquiry which so distingui
him. At the early age of seven he was sent to Ha
School, where, as we have seen, he had for his
panions Parr and Bennet. At Harrow he was more
tinguished for industry, regularity, and attention tha
brilliant talents; however, he at length rose to be
boy of the school, was flattered by his master with
title of the Great Scholar, and drew from Dr Thack
an opinion, that "Jones was a boy of so active a m
that if he were left naked and friendless on Salis
Plain, he would, nevertheless, find the road to fame
fortune." In 1764 he entered at University Coll
Oxford, to which he carried with him not only a
extraordinary store of classical erudition, but some
quaintance with Hebrew and Arabic, and a fair k
ledge of French and Italian. While at the Unive
he worked exceedingly hard, frequently devoting w
nights to study, when he would generally take te
coffee to ward off sleep. Other things besides lear
were, however, not altogether neglected. "His
tions," we are told, "were passed in London, wher
daily attended the schools of Angelo for the purpos
acquiring the elegant accomplishments of riding
fencing. He was always a strenuous advocate for
practice of bodily exercises, as no less useful to invi
ate the frame than as a necessary qualification for
active exertions to which he might eventually be ca
At home his attention was directed to the modern
guages, and he read the best authors in Italian, Spa
and Portuguese, following in all respects the pla
education recommended by Milton, which he had

heart; and thus, to transcribe an observation of his own, with the fortune of a peasant, giving himself the education of a prince."

In 1765 he accepted the situation of private tutor to Lord Althorp, son of Earl Spencer, and in the following year was appointed to a fellowship in the university, which yielded him a hundred pounds a year. His time was now divided principally between Oxford and Althorp, and he not only pursued his classical studies, but acquired a competent knowledge of Arabic and Persian, besides indulging his ambition for universal accomplishment by taking private lessons in dancing from Gallini, the most celebrated dancing-master of the day, and practising the broad-sword with an old pensioner at Chelsea. In 1767 he visited the Continent with the Spencer family, and though his stay there was short, he gratified his insatiable thirst for information by studying German, and dedicated a considerable part of his time "to the lessons of Janson of Aix-la-Chapelle, a most incomparable dancing-master." Before setting out, in the twenty-first year of his age, he began his "Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry," in imitation of Lowth's prelections on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews.

Jones's reputation as an Orientalist was now tolerably wide spread. A striking proof of this is that in 1768 he was selected to render into French a Persian life of Nadir Shah, transmitted to the English Government by the King of Denmark for the purpose of translation. He at first declined the task; but finding no one disposed to undertake it, and unwilling that the King should be obliged to go to France for the performance of any literary work, he was at length induced to engage in it. He would have accomplished the translation much more easily if he had been directed to do it in Latin, as he found the acquisition

of a French style very tedious. However, it was completed within a year, in a manner that did him great credit. It was not printed till 1770, when forty copies upon large paper were sent to Copenhagen, one of them bound with great magnificence for the King himself, the others as presents for his courtiers. In return for all this trouble and expense, his Danish Majesty sent Jones a diploma, constituting him a member of the Royal Society of Copenhagen, and recommended him in the strongest terms to the favour and benevolence of his own Sovereign! No wonder that, when in 1773 an abridged edition of the book was published, Jones in the preface takes an opportunity of lamenting that the profession of literature leads to no benefit or true glory whatsoever, adding, "Unless a man can assert his own independence in active life, it will avail him little to be favoured by the learned, esteemed by the eminent, or *recommended even to kings.*" In 1770 he also finished his Latin "Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry," the style of which is commended by Dr Parr, as good an authority as could have been found. "On the whole," writes Parr, "I have received infinite entertainment from this curious and learned performance, and I look forward with pleasure to the great honour which such a publication will do our country." It was not printed till 1774. The winter of 1770 he passed on the Continent with the Spencer family, during which, he informs one of his correspondents, his occupations were "music, with all its sweetness and feeling; difficult and abstruse problems in mathematics; and the beautiful and sublime in poetry and painting."

Soon after his return to England he left the family of Lord Spencer, and dedicated himself to the study of law as a profession. For a time he almost totally abandoned his Oriental studies, and devoted himself entirely to law.

A letter to his friend Schultens gives his impression of legal studies, and is worth quoting, as showing that slight taint of priggishness which was about the only defect in Jones's character. "The constitution of England is in no respect inferior to that of Rome or Athens; this is my fixed opinion, which I formed in my earliest years, and shall ever retain. Although I sincerely acknowledge the charms of polite literature, I must at the same time adopt the sentiment of Neoptolemus in the tragedy, that we can philosophize with a few only; and no less the axiom of Hippocrates, that life is short, art long, and time swift. But I will also maintain the excellence and delight of other studies. What! shall we deny that there is pleasure in mathematics, when we recollect Archimedes, the prince of geometricians, who was so intensely absorbed in the demonstration of a problem, that he did not discover Syracuse was taken? Can we conceive any study more important than the single one of the laws of our own country? Let me recall to your recollection the observations of L. Crassus and Q. Scævola on this subject, in the treatise of Cicero, *De Oratore*. What! do you imagine the goddess of eloquence to possess less attractions than Thalia or Polyhymnia? or have you forgotten the epithet which Ennius bestows on Cethegus, the quintessence of eloquence, and the flower of the people? Is there a man existing who would not rather resemble Cicero, whom I wish absolutely to make my model, both in the course of his life and studies, than be like Varro, however learned, or Lucretius, however ingenious as a poet? If the study of the law were really unpleasant or disgusting, which is far from the truth, the example of the wisest of the ancients, and of Minerva herself, the goddess of wisdom, would justify me in preferring the useful olive to the barren laurel." It would be

unfair not to mention that this letter was originally written in Latin, and what looks very like nonsense in English often sounds rather sonorous and eloquent in that tongue. The passage where he proposes Cicero as his model is noteworthy. It is not a mere rhetorical flourish, but was really meant. He is said to have invariably read through his works every year.

Jones was called to the bar in 1774. His forensic début was not very successful. He is described as having spoken for nearly an hour with great confidence in a highly declamatory tone, and with studied action, impressing all present who had ever heard of Cicero or Hortensius with the belief that he had worked himself up into the notion of being one or both of them for the occasion. However, he at length gained a fair share of business, and was appointed a commissioner of bankrupts in 1776. In 1778 he gave proof that his devotion to legal studies had not destroyed his taste for Greek literature, by publishing a translation of the "Orations of Isæus," relative to the laws of succession to property in Athens. His next publication was a Latin Ode to Liberty, under the title of "Julii Melesigoni ad Libertatem," a name formed by the transposition of the letters of *Gulielmus Jonesius*. In 1780 he became a candidate for the representation of Oxford, but his chance of election appeared so slender that he withdrew from the contest. Jones's political principles were those of a decided Whig. During the American war he strenuously opposed the measures unfortunately adopted by the British Government.

The other works of Jones written at this time, which seem to deserve mention, are an "Essay on the Law of Bailments," said to be the best written English law-book on a practical subject, a translation of seven ancient Arabian poems, and a "Dialogue between a Farmer and

a Country Gentleman upon the Principles of Government." The grand object of his ambition at this time was the appointment of Chief-Justice in India. In a letter to Lord Spencer, written when he was in suspense about this, he gives a good account of his feelings. "I cannot," he writes, "legally be appointed till January, or next month at soonest, because I am not a barrister of five years' standing till that time. Now, many believe that they keep the place open to me till I am qualified. I certainly wish to have it, because I wish to have twenty thousand pounds in my pocket before I am eight-and-thirty years' old, and then I might contribute in some little degree toward the service of my country in Parliament as well as at the Bar, without selling my liberty to a patron, as too many of my profession are not ashamed of doing; and I might be a speaker in the House of Commons in the full vigour and maturity of my age; whereas, in the slow career of Westminster Hall, I should not perhaps, even with the best success, acquire the same independent station till the age at which Cicero was killed. But be assured, my dear Lord, that if the minister be offended at the style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak of public affairs, and on that account should refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence, without a debt or a care of any kind."

In 1783 his hopes were gratified by an appointment to a seat in the Supreme Court of Judicature at Calcutta. Before setting out he married Miss Shipley, daughter of the Bishop of St Asaph, to whom he had been long attached, thus securing, as his friend Lord Ashburton said, "two of the first objects of human pursuit, those of ambition and love." He arrived at Calcutta in September, and entered upon his judicial functions in December.

Immediately on his arrival he organised a scientific association, under the title of the Asiatic Society. Warren Hastings, the Governor-General, was offered the office of president, but declined it in favour of Sir William Jones, who retained the dignity as long as he lived, and enriched the "Transactions" of the society with many valuable papers.

The study of Sanscrit was one of the first subjects that engaged his attention in India. The business of the Courts kept him closely occupied, and it was only during the vacation that he could find time for any side-work. How he was accustomed to spend his holidays, appears from an account which was found among his papers. In the morning, after writing one letter, he read several chapters of the Bible, and then studied Sanscrit grammar and Hindoo law; the afternoon was given to the geography of India, and the evening to Roman history; when the day was closed by a few games at chess, and the reading of a portion of Ariosto. "It was," says his biographer, "a fixed principle with him, from which he never voluntarily deviated, not to be deterred by any difficulties which were surmountable, from prosecuting to a successful termination what he had once deliberately undertaken. But what appears to me more particularly to have enabled him to employ his talents so much to his own and the public advantage, was the regular allotment of his time to particular occupations, and a scrupulous adherence to the distribution which he had fixed; hence all his studies were pursued without interruption or confusion." The difficulties of Sanscrit soon melted away before his indefatigable endeavours, and he was able to translate "Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring," an ancient Indian drama, and the "Ordinances of Menu."

In 1793 Lady Jones, whose health had become affected

by the climate of India, was compelled to return home. Several years before this her husband had written: "God grant that the bad state of my Anna's health do not compel her to leave India before me. I should remain like a man with a dead palsy in one of his sides; but it were better to lose a side for a time than both for ever." It would have been possible, in a pecuniary point of view, for Jones to have left India along with his wife, but he had voluntarily undertaken a translation of the Digest of Hindu and Mahommedan laws, the completion of which he deemed of vital importance to the right administration of justice in India. "At the period," his biographer tells us, "when this work was undertaken by Sir William Jones, he had not resided in India more than four years and a half; during which time he had not only acquired a thorough knowledge of the Sanscrit language, but had extended his reading in it so far as to be qualified to form a judgment upon the merit and authority of the authors to be used in the compilation of his work; and although his labour was only applied to the disposition of materials already formed, he was enabled by his previous studies to give them an arrangement superior to any existing, and which the learned natives themselves approved and admired. In the dispensations of Providence, it may be remarked, as an occurrence of no ordinary nature, that the professors of the Brahminical faith should so far renounce their reserve and distrust as to submit to the direction of a native of Europe for compiling a digest of their own laws."

The "Digest" was not destined to be completed by Jones. In April 1794, after a short illness, he expired in perfect tranquillity, apparently without the least suffering. Of all the many excellent men England has sent out to rule over her great empire in the East, none can

be mentioned of a more noble and gentle nature than Jones. There was in him a calm, settled love of all that is honourable and good, a burning hatred of tyranny and injustice, a steadfast devotion to duty, and an unwearied diligence such as has rarely been exampled. By all classes in India his death was lamented as a public calamity. Lord Teignmouth relates that the pundits who were in the habit of attending Jones, when he saw them at a public *durbar* a few days after his death, could neither restrain their tears for his loss, nor find terms to express their admiration at the wonderful progress he had made in the sciences which they professed.

The linguistic acquisitions of Sir William Jones have rarely been exceeded. A list preserved in his own handwriting thus classes those languages with which he was in any degree acquainted :—" Eight languages studied critically—English, Latin, French, Italian, Greek, Arabic, Persian, Sanscrit. Eight studied less perfectly, but all intelligible with a dictionary — Spanish, Portuguese, German, Runic, Hebrew, Bengalee, Hindu, Turkish. Twelve studied less perfectly, but all attainable—Thibetian, Pàli, Pahlair, Deri, Russian, Syriac, Ethiopic, Coptic, Welsh, Swedish, Dutch, Chinese." So far as England is concerned, he was the great pioneer in Eastern learning, and doubtless, if his life had been spared, he would have accomplished greater things in this way than he did. Even as it is, his works form an everlasting memorial of his industry, his learning, and his talents.

When one examines the contents of a large classical library, and looks at the old editions of Greek and Latin writers, massive folios and quartos of bygone erudition, and reads the now quite forgotten names on the title-pages, one cannot but heave a sigh of regret that these

diligent students should have sunk into such total obscurity, that their works should now be so utterly neglected, and, if valued at all, only valued for bibliographical reasons, and not for the merit of their contents. What is good in them has long since been incorporated in the writings of later scholars; the utmost attention they now receive is a chance reference in a note, or a brief mention in a catalogue. Yet these works, though now superseded, were by no means useless: they served their purpose in their day and generation, and helped to advance the cause of scholarship at the time. A far sadder sight is it to see a book to which the author devoted the labour of a lifetime, round which his fondest aspirations were centred, by which he hoped that his name might be carried down to posterity as one whose toil had not been in vain, but had been rewarded with glorious results; but which, nevertheless, is founded upon an utterly false theory, never made any one who read it one whit the wiser, and is never mentioned, if mentioned at all, save as an example of the absurd speculations into which learned men sometimes fall. Such a book is the "History of European Languages" by

DR ALEXANDER MURRAY,

an erudite and excellent man, the story of whose career is so remarkable and so stimulating as to well deserve a brief record.

Murray himself has recorded the history of his youthful struggles in a narrative minute almost to tediousness. It is well-nigh impossible to imagine any one born in circumstances affording less opportunity for acquiring learning than he was. The son of a shepherd at Dunterrick, in the county of Galloway, whose whole property

consisted of two or three scores of sheep and four muirland cows—he had literally no money—his early years were spent in an atmosphere of material and intellectual penury. In 1781, when he was six years old, his father purchased for him a Shorter Catechism, which, as was common, also contained the alphabet. This precious document—price one penny—was, however, considered too valuable to be used on ordinary occasions, so his father taught him the letters by writing them on the back of an old wool-card with the end of a burned heather stem. Murray, who appears to have been gifted with a singularly good memory, rapidly learned the elements of reading and writing, and his fame for wondrous reading and extraordinary acquirements soon became the talk of the whole glen. His father was quite unable to send him to school; luckily, however, a brother of his mother came to visit his family, and, being informed of the lad's talents, placed him in 1784 at the school of New Galloway, where he made rapid proficiency. A severe illness put a stop to his school career after he had attended six months, and for the four ensuing years he was obliged to be his own instructor, devouring eagerly the few books that fell in his way. In 1788 he began to give irregular attendance at the school of Minnigaff, where he mastered the elements of French and Latin. He was fortunate enough to purchase at the low price of eighteenpence a copy of "Ainsworth's Dictionary," which had all the Latin words, with the corresponding Greek and Hebrew; also a plan of ancient Rome, and a dictionary of proper names. "I literally read the dictionary throughout," he says. "My plan was to revolve the leaves of the letter A, to notice all the principal words, and their Greek synonymes, not omitting a glance at the Hebrew; to do the same by B, and so on through the book." This re-

minds us of what is told of the great German scholar Wolf, that he read through from beginning to end *Falri Thesaurus*, an enormous folio, the like of which is never published in these degenerate days.

To those who labour as Murray laboured success is sure to come. He soon became able to read Latin and Greek with tolerable fluency, to which he afterwards added a slight knowledge of Hebrew, a little Anglo-Saxon, and a little Welsh. "My practice was," he says, "to lay down a new and difficult task after it had wearied me, to take up another, then a third, and to resume the rotation frequently and laboriously." All this time he endeavoured to eke out his scanty means of subsistence by teaching the children of such of the surrounding farmers as would employ him. As might be expected, his knowledge was more distinguished by width than accuracy. He confesses that, though he certainly knew "a great deal of words and matters," his prosody was bad, and his English neither fluent nor elegant. The number of Greek and Latin authors he ranged through was something extraordinary, and, indeed, if studied with due care and accuracy, would have occupied him half a lifetime. He himself defends the practice of desultory study, yet it cannot be doubted that if he had received proper scholastic training, or if he had inured himself to severe mental discipline, he would afterwards have accomplished work of much greater value than he did.

Following the usual custom of those who read many books, Murray began to think of writing one. "In the autumn of 1792," he writes, "I had, in the hour of ignorance and ambition, believed myself capable of writing an epic poem. For two years before, or rather from the time that I had met with 'Paradise Lost,' sublime poetry was my favourite reading. Homer had encouraged

this taste, and my school-fellow, George Mure, had lent me, in 1791, an edition of Ossian's 'Fingal,' which is, in many passages, a sublime and pathetic performance. I copied 'Fingal,' as the book was lent only for ten days, and carried the MS. about with me. I chose Arthur, general of the Britons, for my hero, and during the winter 1792-93 wrote several thousands of blank verses about his achievements. This was my first attempt in blank verse. In 1790 I had purchased 'The Grave,' a poem by Blair, and committed it almost entirely to memory."

The epic of Arthur went the way of most similar productions. It was burned by the author the following year. However, his literary ardour was not quenched. He began to translate Buchanan's "Fratres Franciscani," and in 1701 having bought for a trifle a MS. volume of the lectures of Arnold Drackenburg, a German professor, on the lives and writings of the Roman authors, he resolved to translate it. "I remained at home during the winter of 1793-94," he writes, "and employed myself in that task. My translation was neither elegant nor correct. My taste was improving; but a knowledge of elegant phraseology and correct diction cannot be acquired without some acquaintance with the world and with the human character in its polished state. The most obscure and uninteresting parts of the 'Spectator,' 'World,' 'Guardian,' and 'Pope's Works,' were those that described life and manners. The parts of those works which I then read with rapture were accounts of tragic occurrences, of great but unfortunate men, and poetry that addressed the passions. In spring 1794 I got a reading of 'Blair's Lectures.' The book was lent by Mr Strang, a relief clergyman, to William Hume, and sublent to me. In 1793 I had seen a volume of an en-

cyclopædia, but found very considerable difficulties in making out the sense of obscure scientific terms with which those books abound.

"Early in 1794 I resolved to go to Dumfries, and present my translation to the booksellers there. As I had doubts respecting the success of a 'History of the Latin Writers,' I likewise composed a number of poems, chiefly in the Scotch dialect, and most of them very indifferent. I went to Dumfries in June 1794, and found that neither of the two booksellers there would undertake to publish my translation; but I got a number of subscription papers printed in order to promote the publication of my poems. I collected by myself and friends four or five hundred subscriptions. At Gatehouse, a merchant there, an old friend, gave me a very curious and large printed copy of the Pentateuch, which had belonged to the celebrated Andrew Melville, and the Hebrew Dictionary of Pagninus, a huge folio. During the visit to Dumfries I was introduced to Robert Burns, who treated me with great kindness, and told me that if I could get out to college without publishing my poems it would be better, as my taste was young and not formed, and I would be ashamed of my productions when I could write and judge better. I understood this, and resolved to make publication my last resource. In Dumfries I bought six or seven plays of Shakespeare, and never read anything except Milton with more rapture and enthusiasm."

Murray was now nineteen, and had perhaps amassed as large a store of miscellaneous linguistic information as any youth of his age in the kingdom. The fame of his singular acquirements soon began to spread abroad beyond the limited circle of his acquaintances, and at length came to the ears of some gentlemen in Edinburgh, who

resolved to help him if his learning was found corresponding to what they had heard. He was accordingly invited to Edinburgh, where he underwent an examination before Dr Baird, Dr Finlayson, and Dr Moodie, clergymen of the city, on which occasion he read and analysed with accuracy a passage of French, an ode of Horace, a page of Homer, and a Hebrew psalm. So well did he acquit himself that these gentlemen procured him the advantages of university education without expense, and likewise obtained for him such pecuniary aid as was necessary. After he had attended college for two years he obtained a bursary from the city, by means of which, and such sums as he could obtain by his labours as a private teacher, and his occasional contributions to the periodical publications of the day, he was able to support himself with some degree of independence.

Murray's talents soon made him known to the brilliant literary circle which then adorned Edinburgh. Among his intimate friends were Jeffrey, Brougham, Campbell, Dr Thomas Brown, and, above all, Leyden. Leyden and he were kindred spirits, and it is not surprising to learn that Murray once observed to Dr Anderson, that there was nobody in Edinburgh whom he would be so much afraid to contend with in languages and philology as Leyden; and that Leyden, without knowing this, once expressed himself in the same terms in commendation of Murray's learning. His intimacy with Jeffrey led him to contribute three articles to the "Edinburgh Review," none of them of any great importance.

When his Arts course was over, Murray applied himself to the study of theology, that he might qualify himself to become a minister of the church. During the whole of his college career every spare minute was given to the

prosecution of his favourite studies. He mastered all the European languages, besides devoting considerable attention to Sanscrit, and the more recondite dialects of the east. His biographer relates that his astonishing facility in the acquisition of languages enabled him to attain in a few months what would have been beyond the reach of ordinary talents and of common industry during the longest life. At this time he was an occasional contributor to the "Scots Magazine," for which he wrote numerous contributions in prose and verse. About the beginning of this century Constable, the proprietor, asked him to become its principal editor, which he consented to do.

In 1802 Murray's singular linguistic attainments pointed him out to the booksellers as a suitable person to edit a new edition of Bruce's "Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile." He not only knew Abyssinian, but had even a thorough mastery of its principal dialects as actually spoken. While engaged on this work, which occupied him about three years, he resided chiefly at Kinnaird House, where he had access to Bruce's papers and manuscripts. To this edition, which appeared in 1805, he added a life of the traveller, which was afterwards published separately. This publication advanced Murray's reputation as a philologist considerably. So unique were his acquirements that in 1811 he was applied to, as the only person in the British dominions adequate to the task, to translate a letter written in Geez from the governor of Tygre to the King of Great Britain. He acquitted himself of this task in a very satisfactory manner.

In 1806, Murray, who had for some time been licensed as a preacher, was appointed assistant and successor to Dr James Muirhead, minister of Urr and, on the death of Dr Muirhead, two years afterwards, became minister of

the parish. He discharged his pastoral duties faithfully and conscientiously, though his devotion to philology continued as ardent as ever. His correspondence with his friends had always some reference to his favourite studies.

A vacancy occurring in the chair of Oriental Languages in Edinburgh University, by the death of Dr Moodie, one of his early patrons, Murray announced himself as a candidate. He obtained excellent testimonials from some learned Orientalists, as well as from Dugald Stewart, Jeffrey, Sir Walter Scott, Dr Thomas Brown, and many others of considerable reputation. After a keen struggle he was elected by the narrow majority of two votes. No doubt he was by far the most suitable man for the office, but the election was in the hands of the Town Council, and private influence was often much more efficacious than learning or talents. A few days after his appointment the University conferred on him the degree of D.D.

Murray was now at last in a situation where his peculiar talents could find full scope. He immediately set to work, and prepared an elementary treatise, "Outlines of Oriental Philology," for the use of the members of his class, which was attended not only by divinity students, but by many literary men and others, who were anxious to hear the prelections of so celebrated an Orientalist. But just when a brighter and more useful career seemed to be opening out to him, he was stricken down by disease. In February 1813 a pulmonary complaint, with which he had been previously affected, became so violent as to prevent his attendance in the class-room. He gradually grew worse and worse, till on the 15th April 1813, he expired, at the early age of thirty-seven.

Murray is an example of a pretty numerous class of men whose lives are considerably more important than their works. A man of the most energetic persevering

character, who was turned aside by no obstacle and daunted by no opposition, his life affords a useful lesson to all. Save his remarkable linguistic faculty, he does not appear to have been distinguished by brilliant talents, and, as has been said before, his *magnum opus* is of no value whatever. It was published after his death, in 1823, by Dr Scott of Corstorphine, who appears to have formed a very exaggerated idea of its merits. It is entitled, "History of the European Languages, or Researches into the Affinities of the Teutonic, Greek, Celtic, Sclavonic, and Indian Nations." In it he undertakes to prove that all the languages of Europe may be traced to a single radical dialect, which may be analytically put into a few monosyllables, nine in number, which may, in turn, be reduced to one *ag* or *wag*, which, he thinks, was probably the first articulate sound. Murray is by no means the only one who has mounted a philological hobby-horse; and when we consider that in his time there was, properly speaking, no science of language, we should not be too harsh in our criticisms. "So far," says Dr Browne, "is Dr Murray's system from being 'demonstrated truth,' or even 'looking very like it,' as his editor has fondly imagined, that it appears to be equally absurd, fanciful, and visionary, a sort of solemn, though, of course, unintentional, burlesque on the extravagancies of etymologists; and, independently of all other considerations, it is liable to this insuperable objection, that it proceeds upon an assumption of identity among languages which differ entirely in their grammatical structure and composition, as well as in their vocabularies, and which have nothing in common except some few terms which have been interchanged in the course of war, conquest, and commercial relations." This is all quite true, and much the same might be said about many other linguistic

theories that have been much more talked of than Murray's. The best that can be said of his treatise is, that it bears witness to his laborious research, and his extremely wide acquaintance with languages of all kinds. If his life had been spared, work of a much more solid and enduring kind might have been expected of him.

DR ALEXANDER ADAM

is another instance of one who attained great learning in spite of many opposing circumstances. His father occupied a small farm near Forres, and there Adam was born in June 1741. From his earliest years he manifested a love of knowledge and a fondness for books which augured well for his success in the future. Adam was mainly self-educated; for his father does not appear to have been distinguished by any extraordinary degree of intelligence, and the attainments of his schoolmaster were so slender, that from him he could obtain but little assistance after the elements of knowledge had been acquired. The ardent young student, ere he was sixteen, borrowed from a neighbouring clergyman a copy of the small Elzevir edition of Livy, and before daybreak, during the mornings of winter, by the light of splinters of wood, perused the whole of this classic, passing over such passages as he could not construe by the help of "Cole's Dictionary." In 1757 he tried his luck at the Aberdeen bursary competition, but as the bursaries were awarded for the best written exercises, and he had had no experience in composition, he was unsuccessful. The following year, the Rev. Mr Watson, a relative of his mother, sent him an invitation to come to Edinburgh, "provided he was prepared to endure every hardship for a season." It need scarcely be said that Adam eagerly closed with

this offer. Mr Watson procured him free admission to the lectures of the University professors, but there his assistance ended. For a considerable time, while attending the College classes, Adam's sole means of subsistence consisted of one guiuea per quarter, which he obtained for acting as private tutor to Alan Macconochie, afterwards Lord Meadowbank. "At this time," writes his biographer, "he lodged in a small room at Restalrig, in the north-eastern suburbs, and for this accommodation he paid fourpence a week. All his meals, except dinner, uniformly consisted of oatmeal made into porridge, together with small-beer, of which he only allowed himself half a bottle at a time. When he wished to dine, he purchased a penny loaf at the nearest baker's shop; and, if the day was fair, he would despatch his meal in a walk to the Meadows or Hope Park, which is adjoining to the southern part of the city; but if the weather was foul, he had recourse to some long and lonely stair, which he would climb, eating his dinner at every step. By this means all expense for cookery was avoided, and he wasted neither coal nor candles; for, when he was chill, he used to run till his blood began to glow, and his evening studies were always prosecuted under the roof of some one or other of his companions." Such a narrative as this would only be spoiled by comment.

After attending the university for eighteen months, during which he was able by assiduous application to make up for the defects of his early teaching, Adam was appointed head-master of George Watson's Hospital at Edinburgh. In this situation he remained for three years, during which, besides discharging the duties of his office, he read critically the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Cicero, and Livy. On being asked to become tutor to the son of Mr Kincaid, afterwards Lord

Provost of Edinburgh, he severed his connection with Watson's Hospital. In 1765 he became, through the influence of Mr Kincaid, assistant to Mr Matheson, the Rector of the High School; and on his retirement in 1771, Adam was entrusted with the rectorship.

Many old pupils have borne testimony to the excellent way in which Adam discharged the duties of his responsible office; among others, Sir Walter Scott, who, in his fragment of autobiography, has left some pleasing reminiscences of him. "After having been three years under Mr Fraser," he says, "our class was, in the usual routine of the school, turned over to Dr Adam, the rector. It was from this respectable man that I first learned the value of the knowledge I had hitherto considered only as a burdensome task. It was the fashion to remain two years at his class, where we read Cæsar, and Livy, and Sallust, in prose; Virgil, Horace, and Terence, in verse. I had by this time mastered, in some degree, the difficulties of the language, and began to be sensible of its beauties. This was really gathering grapes from thistles; nor shall I soon forget the swelling of my little pride when the rector pronounced, that though many of my school-fellows understood the Latin better, *Gualterus Scott* was behind few in following and enjoying the author's meaning. . . . Dr Adam, to whom I owed so much, never failed to remind me of my obligations when I had made some figure in the literary world. He was, indeed, deeply imbued with that fortunate vanity which alone could induce a man who has arms to pare and burn a muir, to submit to the yet more toilsome task of cultivating youth. As Catholics confide in the imputed righteousness of their saints, so did the good old Doctor plume himself upon the success of his scholars in life; all of which he never failed (and often justly) to

claim as the creation, or at least the fruits, of his early instructions. He remembered the fate of every boy at his school during the fifty years he had superintended it, and always traced their success or misfortunes entirely to their attention or negligence when under his care. His 'noisy mansion,' which to others would have been a melancholy bedlam, was the pride of his heart; and the only fatigues he felt, amidst din and tumult, and the necessity of reading themes, hearing lessons, and maintaining some degree of order at the same time, were relieved by comparing himself to Cæsar, who could dictate to three secretaries at once,—so ready is vanity to lighten the labours of duty. It is a pity that a man so learned, so admirably adapted for his station, so useful, so simple, so easily contented, should have had other subjects of mortification. But the magistrates of Edinburgh, not knowing what a treasure they possessed in Dr Adam, encouraged a savage fellow, named Nicol, one of the under-masters, in insulting his person and authority. This man was an excellent classical scholar, and an admirable convivial humourist (which latter quality recommended him to the friendship of Burns), but worthless, drunken, and inhumanly cruel to the boys under his charge. He carried his feud against the rector within an inch of assassination, for he waylaid and knocked him down in the dark. The favour which this worthless rival obtained in the town-council led to the consequences which for some time clouded poor Adam's happiness and fair fame."

From this it will be seen that Adam's situation as rector of the High School was not altogether a bed of roses. In 1772 he published his "Rudiments of English and Latin Grammar," in which his idea was to connect the study of English Grammar with that of the Latin, as

the Romans joined the grammar of their own language with that of the Greek. "It is particularly necessary," he says in the preface, "in Scotland to pay attention to the English in conjunction with the Latin, as, by neglecting it, boys at school learn many improprieties in point of grammar, as well as of pronunciation, which it is difficult in after-life to correct." This union of Latin and English Grammar was considered a great innovation, and Adam shared the common fate of innovators, by being bitterly assailed for what was considered a daring schism and heresy. Among the many opponents whom this little book raised up against him was Dr Gilbert Stuart, a man who rendered considerable talents infamous by the base and ill-natured use he almost invariably made of them. Stuart was a relative of Ruddiman, whose "Grammar" Adam's had supplanted, and, as an additional incentive to hostility, he conceived that Adam had been raised to the rectorship more by influence than by merit. He accordingly assaulted our unfortunate hero in all the periodical works of the day to which he could obtain access. To such a height did the controversy about the grammar rise, that in 1786 the magistrates of Edinburgh issued an order directing the rector and the other masters of the High School to instruct their scholars by Ruddiman's "Rudiments and Grammar," and prohibiting every other grammar of the Latin language from being made use of. Adam, however, disregarded this and a subsequent order to the same effect, and continued to use his own rules without being further interrupted. He adopted the following curious method of recommending his "Grammar." When he wished his pupils to use it, he used to say, "This is a prohibited book, and I do not wish, nor have I ever been under the necessity, to force it into use. There are a few questions which I wish to

propose, and if you can answer them I am content; but if you cannot, I must refer you to my grammar for the means of enabling you to give me a reply." For all the slights to which his "Grammar" was subjected, Adam was partly compensated by the degree of LL.D., which was conferred on him by Edinburgh University in 1780, chiefly at the suggestion of Principal Robertson, and by the approbation bestowed on it by such men as Lord Kames, Bishop Lowth, and Dr Vincent.

In 1791 appeared Adam's work on "Roman Antiquities," which, until quite recently, was the standard class-book on the subject. For it he received £600, not very much when we consider what an immense labour it must have been. Few books of the same size contain so large a mass of useful information; information, too, of a kind then not to be obtained except by researches into innumerable books, for, when Adam wrote, the whole department of Roman Antiquities was one confused chaos, which he was about the first to reduce to some sort of order and system. Adam's next work was a "Summary of Geography and History," published in 1794, a thick octavo volume of nine hundred pages, containing a summary of all history, ancient and modern, with the manners and customs of the various nations; the mythology of the Greeks; the geography of all ages and all countries, including even the local situations of remarkable cities; and an account of the progress of astronomy and geography, from the earliest periods to the present time, with a description of the planetary system. Large as the volume is, it is not large enough for a fully detailed account of so many things, and the information given is sometimes very imperfect, though, upon the whole, the work reflects the highest credit upon the writer's industry and width of information. A

more useful work was a treatise on "Classical Biography," which appeared in 1800, and which, although its sale was more limited than that of any of Adam's other works, is said to have been, in the department of Roman history, decidedly the best work of the kind in the language at the time of its publication. The last of Adam's productions was his "Latin Dictionary," published in 1805, a very useful book, though in parts somewhat inconveniently arranged. Taking a general view of all Dr Adam's works, and looking at their whole scope and tendency, we are safe to say that no writer in Britain has ever done more to assist the young student of Latin. If he had devoted himself to the higher departments of learning, in which he was well qualified to excel, he might, perhaps, have obtained a wider fame among scholars, but his life could not have been more usefully spent than it was.

When the French Revolution broke out, Dr Adam, whose opinions were of a strongly liberal complexion, incautiously let fall some words of sympathy with the revolutionists. This, as Scott says, was very natural, for as all his ideas of existing governments were derived from his experiences of the town-council of Edinburgh, it must be admitted that they scarce brooked comparison with the free states of Rome and Greece, from which he borrowed his opinions concerning republics. But, unfortunately, his want of caution in speaking on the political topics of the day, lost him the respect of the boys, most of whom were accustomed to hear very different opinions expressed in the bosom of their families, and he became so obnoxious a person, that many of those who had been his pupils passed him in the street without recognition. However, we have the testimony of his biographer that his character derived a lustre of no common kind from

his deportment amidst the harassing obstructions that were raised up against his philological lessons, and from his firmness during the reign of political terrorism. "He had to cope with prejudice in its most malignant forms; yet in maintaining a contest, under which the powers of an ordinary mind would have sunk, he never absented himself from his official avocations for a single day. When he had thus fulfilled his duties to the public, he continued, with the utmost calmness, his extensive classical researches. This composure of mind he must have derived from no other source than a full conviction of the rectitude of those principles upon which he set out, and of the propriety of his conduct. Such a conviction must have been strengthened, and in a great measure formed, by the previous habit of proving to himself, by a course of rigid self-examination, the expediency or impropriety of every act before it was committed. Exertions of this sort can only be made by a most vigorous mind. When they have been improved into regular habits, however, the great affairs of human life become plain and easy. But how few ever attain such habits, and how seldom does the mind submit to such discipline, without much apparent effect."

However, Dr Adam soon got over the hostility he had unwittingly excited against himself, and in his latter days no citizen of Edinburgh was more generally esteemed than he. So deeply did he take to heart the lesson he had received against indulging in political controversy, that he even abstained in great measure from reading newspapers, a species of publication in which, he would remark, he felt scarcely any interest after the period of the French Revolution. In December 1809, the amiable old man was seized with an attack of apoplexy, and died after lingering for a few days. His last words were, "It

grows dark, boys,—you may go." His mind had reverted to the scene where he had spent the better part of his life, and to which the greater part of his hopes and anxieties had always been directed. It was a fitting conclusion to a noble and useful career.

Few men have ever died so universally lamented as Dr Adam. The general feeling of his old pupils was well expressed by one of the most promising of their number, Francis Horner, in an obituary notice of him which he wrote for an English newspaper. "His long life," he writes, "was to its very close an unremitted course of labour in the service of the public; all the leisure which the duties of his office left him being devoted to the composition of works for improving the methods of classical education in Scotland, but which were found to be so useful and accurate, that they have been received with approbation and adopted in this country. To the most unwearied application, he joined an enthusiasm for learning and for the liberties of mankind, and possessed the most perfect independence and integrity of mind. The men who were educated in that school during his time, will long remember how he inspired the boys both with an attachment to himself and to the pursuits in which he instructed them, and will always regard his memory with affection and gratitude." The magistrates of Edinburgh made some atonement for the sins of their predecessors by honouring Dr Adam's remains with a public funeral.

Mr Henderson, the writer of Dr Adam's "Life," has described his personal appearance as that of a scholar who dressed neatly for his own sake, but who had never incommoded himself with fashion in the cut of his coat, or in the regulation of his gait. Upon the street he often appeared in a studious attitude; and in winter always

walked with his hands crossed, and thrust into his sleeves. His features were regular and manly, and he was above the middle size. In his well-formed proportions, and in his firm, regular pace, there appeared the marks of habitual temperance. So attractive are his manners said to have been, that no man could leave his company without declaring that he loved Dr Adam.

In truth, he appears to have been a singularly lovable character, a man of the same stamp as Fielding's "Parson Adams," learned in classic lore, but ignorant of the world and guileless as a child. Those who have looked at the print taken from Sir Henry Raeburn's portrait of Dr Adam, will quite agree with what is said above as to his personal appearance. An amiable vanity adds something to the charm which surrounds Adam's character. We cannot help loving him all the more when we read that he was wont to tell many amusing anecdotes to his class, and that he was very frequently the hero of his own tale. Certainly classical learning had effected in him what in many it has not effected, in spite of the axiom—it had, indeed, softened his manners, and not allowed him to be ferocious. The bitter experiences of his youth, instead of souring his nature, seem only to have made him more gentle, more tolerant, and more sympathizing.

A kindred spirit to Adam, in many ways, was

DR JAMES MELVIN,

whose great Latin scholarship is a sort of tradition in the north of Scotland. Perhaps it may seem to require some apology to include a man like Melvin

in a series of lives of great scholars; for the only book he published is not of an important nature, and his celebrity never extended beyond a limited circle. Nevertheless, Melvin was really a *great* scholar, and better deserved the name than many who have been much more celebrated than he was. A distinguished pupil of his, Professor Masson, has done something to rescue his memory from unmerited oblivion, by some genial and appreciative recollections of him contributed to *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1863, from which the following sketch is compiled.

The facts of Melvin's life are soon told. He was born in Aberdeen, in 1794, of poor parents, and after passing through the ordinary Grammar School and College course, was appointed usher at a private academy at Udny, and then under-master in Old Aberdeen Grammar School. In 1822 he was invited by his old master, Nicoll, then in declining health, to be head assistant in the Aberdeen Grammar School; and, on Nicoll's death, he was appointed to succeed him, after a public competition, in which he distanced the other candidates, and won extraordinary applause from the judges. The rector, Cromar, dying in 1826, Melvin, though the youngest under master, again, by public competition, won the unanimous appointment, and in that year, at the age of thirty-two, was installed into the post, which he held till death. Shortly after this he was appointed to the Latin Lectureship in Marischal College. Such is a very brief outline of Melvin's life, which we regret having no materials to fill up a little more fully. To give Professor Masson's admirable narrative in other words than his own, would be doing it great injustice; in what follows, therefore, we shall use his language with a few slight alterations and abridgments.

Whatever start he may have had in the lessons of Nicoll and Cromar, and whatever firmer grasp of rudimentary Latin he may have got by teaching it at Udny, and under M'Lauchlan in Old Aberdeen, Melvin's scholarship must have been the result of an amount of reading for himself utterly unusual in his neighbourhood. The proof of this exists in the superb library, one of the wonders of Aberdeen, which, even with his moderate means, he had managed to collect around him. There was nowhere in that part of Scotland, probably nowhere in all Scotland, such another private library of the classic writers, and of all commentaries, lexicons, scholiasts, and what not, appertaining to them. To see him in his large room in Belmont Street, every foot of the wall-space of which, from the floor to the ceiling, and even over the door and between the windows, was occupied with books filling the exactly-fitted book-shelves, was at once a treat and a revelation to a native of these parts. And the collection of this library must have been begun early in his life. His sister, who was considerably his junior, says that her first recollections were "not so much recollections of him, as of books and him." From the first he had catalogues of books sent to him from all quarters, and he was always purchasing. He had complete sets of the fine old editions of the Latin classics, Dutch and English, with some of the later German, and his collection of mediæval Latin literature was probably the completest in Scotland. The most obscure and out-of-the-way names were all represented. In Greek literature his collection was nothing like so full; there were even extraordinary gaps in it. Among the Latins, he abounded most in editions of Horace, having, as he once told a friend, Professor Geddes, a copy of Horace for every day in the year. And so, among these Latin

classics, and the commentators and grammarians of all ages illustrating them, he had read and read, till, at the time of his appointment to the Grammar School Rectorship, his knowledge of Latinity was probably already more extensive, deep, subtle, and delicate than that of any other scholar within the limits of North Britain. It may be mentioned that Melvin's library was bequeathed to Marischal College, Aberdeen, where the old dust-covered volumes may be inspected by the curious.

Of Melvin's method of teaching Latin, Professor Masson has given an interesting account. A large portion of the work of his classes consisted, of course, of readings in the Latin authors, in continuation of what had been read in the junior classes. Here, unless perchance he began with a survey of the grammar, to see how his pupils were grounded, and to rivet them afresh to the rock, they first came to perceive his essential peculiarities. Accuracy to the last and minutest word read, and to the nicest shade of distinction between two apparent synonyms, was what he studied and insisted on, and this always with a view to the cultivation of a taste for pure and classic, as distinct from Brummagem Latinity. The authors chosen were few and select, chiefly Cæsar and Livy among the prose writers, and Virgil, Horace, and Buchanan's Psalms among the poets. The quantity read was not large—seldom more than a page a day. But every sentence was gone over at least five times, first read aloud by the boy that might be called on; then translated word for word with the utmost literality, each Latin word being named as the English equivalent was fitted to it; then rendered as a whole, somewhat more freely and elegantly, but still with no permission of that slovenly and soul-ruining practice of translation which is called "giving the spirit of the original;" then analysed

etymologically, each important verb and noun becoming the text for an exercise up and down, backwards and forwards, in all appertaining to it; and lastly, construed, or analysed in respect of its syntax and idiom, the reasons of its moods, cases, and what not. In the case of a poetical reading there was, of course, the further process of scanning, in which Melvin was, above all, exacting. So the common reproach against Scottish scholarship, that Scotchmen have no grounding in quantities, and say *vectĭgal* or *vectīgal*, just as Providence may direct them at the moment, the Aberdeen Grammar School, at least, was not liable. A falsè quantity was even more shameful in Melvin's code than a false construction, and it was not his fault if his pupils did not turn out good prosodians. Of course, in the readings, whether from the prose writers or the poets, occasion was taken by Melvin to convey all sorts of minute pieces of elucidation and historical and biographical information, in addition to what the boys were expected to have procured for themselves in the act of preparation; and in this way a considerable amount of curious lore—about the Roman calendar, the Roman wines, and the way of drinking them, etc.—was gradually and accurately acquired. Never, either, did Melvin leave a passage of peculiar beauty of thought, expression, or sound, without rousing his pupils to a sense of this peculiarity, and impressing it upon them by reading the passage eloquently and lovingly, so as to give due effect to it. Over a line like Virgil's description of the Cyclopes working at the anvil, he would linger with real ecstasy, repeating it again and again, with something of a tremble and excitement in his grave voice. On the whole, however, Melvin's teaching of Latin was strictly philological.

In what way the pupils of Melvin had their knowledge

of Latin put to the test, has been very amusingly described by Professor Masson. "Almost from the first class," he says, "we were practised in making Latin sentences, and even in constructing sentences to be turned into Latin, with which publicly to puzzle each other. And very soon, in addition to the printed exercise books of this kind which we used, there came into play the agency of what were called 'Versions'—*i.e.*, pieces of English expressly prepared by the master, to be dictated to us in the class-room, and there turned into Latin. But it was in Melvin's classes that this practice of version-making attained its fullest development. He did not tax us much in the way of Latin versification, which was reserved rather for his Marischal College classes, but our practice in Latin prose competition was incessant. Two entire days in every week were devoted to 'the Versions'; and these were the days of the keenest emulation. In anticipation of them, it was our habit to jot down, in note-books of our own, any specialities of phrase or idiom upon which Melvin dwelt in the course of our readings. With these manuscript 'phrase-books,' or 'idiom-books' (containing, doubtless, much that might have been found in print, but precious as compiled by ourselves), and with 'Ainsworth's Dictionary' for our authorised guide under certain rather numerous cautions and restrictions, we assembled on the morning of every version day; and, sure enough, in the piece of English which Melvin then dictated to us, there were some of the traps against which he had recently been warning us. We sat and wrote the versions—those who were done first going up to Melvin's desk to have them examined; after which, they became his assistants in examining the other versions, so as to clear them all off within the day. In these versions into Latin, as in the translations from the Latin, closeness to

the original was imperative; no fraudulent 'giving the spirit of the original,' so as to elude the difficulty presented by the letter, was tolerated for a moment. The system of marking was peculiar. You were classed, not by any positive merits of ingenuity, elegance, and such like, but, as in the world itself, by your freedom from faults or illegalities. There were three grades of error—the *minimus*, or, as we called it, the *minie*, which counted as one, and which included mis-spellings, wrong choices of words, etc.; the *medius* or *medie*, which counted as two, and included false tenses and such other slips; and the *maximus* or *maxie*, which counted as four, and included wrong genders, a glaring indicative for a subjunctive, etc. There might, in a single word, be even (horrible event!) a double *maxie*, or a combination of *maxie* or *medie*, or *maxie* and *minie*. On a *maxie* in the version of a good scholar, Melvin was always cuttingly severe. '*Ut* . . . *dixit*,' he would say, underscoring the two words in a sentence where the latter should have been *diceret*. '*Ut* . . . *dixit*,' he would repeat, refreshing his frown with a pinch of snuff. '*Ut* . . . *dixit*,' he would say a third time, with a look in the culprit's face as if he had murdered his father. 'Oh, William, William, you have been very giddy of late;' and William would descend crest-fallen, and be miserable for half a day." It may be remarked that Melvin's system of marking still obtains in the Granite City, where *medies*, *maxies*, and *minies* are familiar words among the boys in training for the University.

Like all genuine men, Melvin won the respect and love of his pupils. They all recognised that his scholarship was really of a deep and solid nature, and looked up to him accordingly. Stricter or more perfect order than that which he kept in the two classes which he taught

simultaneously, it is impossible to conceive, and it was all done by sheer moral impressiveness, and a power of rebuke, either by mere glance, or by glance and word together, in which he was masterly. Doubtless, in his own heart, Melvin must often have longed for some opportunity of displaying the treasures of his scholarship more widely than he was able to do within the walls of the Grammar School. His erudition was vast in the Latin of all styles and epochs, and it must have cost him severe self-repression to refrain from going into matters out of the range of beginners. Almost the only indulgence in the way of æsthetic criticism he allowed himself, was the occasional quoting of passages in Burns to illustrate Horace.

A slight monument of the style of Melvin's Latin scholarship, and especially, as a competent critic has said, of the *curiosa diligentia* in minute matters for which he was remarkable, remains in a Latin grammar which he compiled for the school soon after his appointment to it, and which was used in the school incessantly, from the lower classes upwards, as supplementary to the Rudiments. This grammar, which went through three editions, consists, in the first place, of a series of rules in etymology and prosody, all in Latin hexameters, partly made by Melvin, partly mended and borrowed by him from preceding grammars of the kind—the whole of which had to be got by heart gradually by the boys. The Latin rules, however, are bedded in an explanatory English text, elucidating obscure points, and giving additional information. That so much of Melvin's scholarship died with him, uncommemorated by any work from his pen in addition to his grammar, or by any sufficient tradition among his pupils, is a matter for regret. Towards a Latin dictionary, on which he was reported to

be engaged, and which was certainly thought of by him as a worthy labour of his life, we know not whether he left any materials. A living scholar, who knew him well, has expressed his regret that he did not, at least, give to the world an edition of some classic author which might have preserved some of "those fruits of ripe scholarship, and those morsels of keen and delicate criticism, which he had gathered in his long experience;" and the same scholar suggests that Statius, "who is in want of such a service," might have suited the purpose. But in Melvin the passion for acquisition appears to have conquered the desire for production.

Melvin was twice a candidate for the Professorship of Humanity in Marischal College, but in both cases his hopes were doomed to disappointment. Soon after his second failure to obtain the coveted post, testimonials from old pupils and other public demonstrations attested the sympathy felt for him, and the desire to compensate as far as possible for his disappointment. In particular, a testimonial consisting of £300 in a silver snuff-box, was presented to him on the 18th of June 1853, by a deputation, headed by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, which waited upon him in his own house. He thanked them feelingly, but was in too feeble health to say much. On Monday the 28th of June, he was in his place in the school; but on that day he fainted from exhaustion, and had to be carried home. The next day he died in his house in Belmont Street, aged fifty-nine years. Throughout the whole of the north of Scotland, the regret felt for his death was deep and universal, and his old pupils everywhere lamented that their respected master had died without accomplishing any work which might carry his name down to posterity. In his influence over the mind of his scholars, Melvin, in many re-

spects, seems to have resembled Arnold of Rug those who enjoyed the benefit of Melvin's tuitio on him as the very ideal of a schoolmaster, an "Melvinians" are firmly persuaded that no Latini present century at any rate, can be compared to

Melvin's personal appearance was well qua command respect. "Grim Plato" was the name by, and it seems, as perhaps school nick-names are, to have been a very appropriate designati was lean but rather tall and well-shouldered, an face of the pale-dark kind, naturally austere, a more stern by the marks of the small-pox. H despite his grim and somewhat scarred face, formed, and its short black hair, crisping close defined its shape exactly, and made it look like Roman head. One very un-Roman habit, inde vin possessed—that of snuff-taking. But though snuff in immoderate quantities, it was as a Roma man might have taken it—with all the dignity toga, and every pinch emphatic.

The story of a career of almost uninterrupted and that success richly merited, can hardly fail pleasant one to relate. Such a career was that c

BISHOP BLOMFIELD,

who did whatever his hand found to do with might from his youth upwards, and whose life a useful lesson to those who imagine that importa tions are to be jumped into or had for the aski that luck is the arbiter of eminence. Charles Blomfield was born at Bury St Edmunds on the

May 1786, and after receiving the rudiments of his education from his father, was sent to the Grammar School of his native town. Although very delicate, and so diminutive in stature that his school-fellows gave him the name of "Tit Blomfield," the activity and brilliance of his mental faculties amply compensated for his bodily weakness. To all who asked the clever, sickly-looking boy what career he intended to follow out in after life, there was one answer ready—"I mean to be a bishop." He soon outstripped all his class-fellows in classics, but this did not content his ambitious spirit. Of his own accord he studied modern languages, chemistry and botany, rising at five o'clock in the morning to find time for these multifarious pursuits. His very recreations were characteristic. He constructed an electric machine for his own use, out of which he doubtless contrived to extract a good deal of amusement; he scribbled verses, and he devoted some attention to music. Thus cheerfully working on, ever nursing in his breast the great ambition of his life, Blomfield remained in his native town till 1804, when he was entered as a pensioner at Trinity College, Cambridge, where, in the following year, he gained a scholarship.

Though he had been a diligent student, and though the school at Bury was a very good one of its kind, Blomfield soon found that in some important points of scholarship, particularly in those niceties of grammar and composition which are so much valued and so difficult to acquire, he could not hold his own against those educated at great schools such as Eton. No sooner was his deficiency found out than he determined to repair it. He was never the man to own himself vanquished when it was in the power of human perseverance to gain the victory. Accordingly, though he had always

been a severe student, his efforts were now redoubled. His day, according to his biographer, was generally thus divided. Rising in time for the early chapel service, which he never missed during his under-graduate life, except when prevented by illness, he began reading at nine; at twelve he allowed himself two hours' recreation, walking or rowing, or occasionally a game at billiards; and, returning to his books at three, read without interruption till twelve at night, and occasionally till three in the morning. Sometimes he alternated his work, one week sitting up till three, and the next rising at four. The remonstrances of physicians or friends, who warned him that he read too hard, were in vain. The objects which he had set before him must be gained at whatever sacrifice of time and health. Of his industry at this period some proofs remain, in the shape of very elaborate note-books, written with that caligraphy which scholars had not yet learned to despise. A Bury friend meeting him in the streets of Cambridge, in a long vacation, exclaimed: "Why, Charles Blomfield, I believe if you dropped from the sky you would be found with a book in your hand."

The results of this labour were soon apparent. In four months he read through Aristophanes, all the Greek tragedians, Herodotus, Thucydides, and the greater part of Cicero. Besides this he made himself an accurate grammarian, and acquired great skill in Greek and Latin composition, which he taught himself in the best way possible—by translating a passage out of some classic author into English, and, after the interval of a day or two, retranslating it, that he might compare his own with the original, a practice which reminds us of the way in which Buckle made a systematic study of English style. It cannot be wondered at, that with industry such as this

Blomfield should have carried off every prize for which he competed, and should have won the respect of his tutors and the admiration of his friends. Of the latter, he soon gathered round him many who afterwards attained considerable eminence, among them Monk (the biographer of Bentley), Baron Alderson, Chief Baron Pollock, and others of distinguished university reputation. Blomfield had a considerable share of caustic wit and irony, as we shall afterwards see, which was doubtless duly appreciated by his friends. "Few persons," writes Chief Baron Pollock, "were equal to him in the point and liveliness of his talk—yet I never heard him originate or repeat an expression which, as a bishop, he could wish unsaid; and though he largely contributed to the vivacity of every party where he was present, and was the author of many witty and smart sayings, which were handed about, he never forgot the decorum that belonged to the path of life he had already chosen."

Since, then as now, the principal honours in Cambridge were bestowed on mathematical excellence, about the close of 1806 Blomfield found it necessary to bestow more attention than he had hitherto done upon that study. He had no natural bent of mind towards mathematics—classical literature was the study he really loved; but as fame and honour were to be won by their study, he applied himself to it with characteristic energy, though in this attempt his tutor and all his friends united to discourage him. Every one knows how dry and difficult a study mathematics are to those who have no inborn talent for them. Blomfield, therefore, deserves all the more credit for having attained the success he did. He came out third wrangler, no contemptible position under any circumstances, and an extraordinarily high one for a man to take who had proved himself, by

winning the Craven Scholarship, to be the best classical scholar among the under-graduates of his time. Porson acted as examiner for this scholarship, and among other passages given to the candidates to translate was a difficult and corrupt chorus in Æschylus, to which he had applied emendations. Fortunately, Blomfield had read those emendations and had treasured them up in his memory, so he was able to make use of them at the proper moment, and thereby to win the admiration and respect of the great critic. Among the other classical prizes which Blomfield carried away, were the Chancellor's medal and the members' prize for a Latin dissertation.

In 1809 Blomfield was elected a fellow of Trinity College. His habits of study continued the same as before, his ambition at this period being apparently to win fame by becoming a great verbal critic like Porson. Perhaps never has the reputation of English scholarship stood higher than it did at this time. Parr, Charles Burney, Butler of Shrewsbury, Monk, Dobree, Elmsley, Maltby, were all names held in high esteem on the Continent as well as in this country. Among those of the school which professed to adhere strictly to Porson's principles, there was no more rising man than Blomfield. Like most young men he made his first appearance as an author in the character of a reviewer. Butler of Shrewsbury, a man of extensive learning, but distinguished by no extraordinary vigour of mind, and remarkable for the interminable prolixity of his notes, published an edition of Æschylus, in which, whether intentionally or not, he refrained from noticing any of the many emendations of the text of that author which had been proposed by Porson. This work Blomfield noticed in the *Edinburgh Review*, and gave Butler a most unmerciful troun-

ing. To this criticism Butler was ill-advised enough to reply in a pamphlet, in which he defends himself very feebly against the dexterous thrusts of his adversary, and is obliged to find vent for his indignation by resorting to personalities. As Parr and Butler were great friends, Parr was highly indignant at Blomfield. "What!" he exclaimed, "a young man presume to write against Sam Butler: I'll crush him." However, Parr never even attempted to crush him, but, instead, soon after entered upon an amicable correspondence with him. The manner in which Blomfield repelled the attack made upon him by Butler reflects great credit on his prudence. He took no notice of it at the time, but when succeeding volumes of Butler's "Æschylus" came out, Blomfield again reviewed them in the *Edinburgh* with the same unsparing severity, saying at the outset that neither the example of Dr Butler nor the obvious advantages he [Blomfield] would have in such a contest should tempt him into a war of personalities, and that he would proceed to examine the volumes before him with the same calmness and the same freedom as if he were ignorant of the effect of his former animadversions.

This contest with Butler was a mere skirmish compared to the controversy Blomfield had some years afterwards with Edmund Henry Barker, already mentioned as the compiler of the *Parriana*. Of poor Barker the good and the evil qualities are now alike forgotten, and even during his lifetime he was censured or neglected by the leading scholars of our own country, although enjoying a fair share of reputation on the Continent. He was born at his father's vicarage of Hollym, in Yorkshire, in 1778, and entered as a student of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1807, where he obtained a medal for Greek and Latin epigrams, but did not take any degree, having,

it is said, scrupled to take the bachelor's oath. He afterwards became amanuensis to Dr Parr, at whose residence at Hatton he remained for several years, and whose esteem he succeeded in winning. He then married and settled at Thetford, in Norfolk, from which for nearly twenty-five years a series of laborious compilations came out. His last years were marked by painful reverses of fortune. He lost all his money by a lawsuit, was obliged to sell his splendid library, and for a time was confined in a debtor's prison. He died in London in 1839 in a state of extreme destitution. Barker was a man of great industry, but he had no taste, no reasoning power, no accurate scholarship. Besides publishing many editions of classical authors, he issued a volume in which he attempted to disprove Sir Philip Francis's authorship of the letters of Junius, and superintended the English impression of Noah Webster's "English Dictionary."

A great many of the minor lucubrations of Barker appeared in Valpy's "Classical Journal," which carried on a constant war with the "Museum Criticum," a periodical started by Blomfield, which sustained a sickly existence from 1813 to 1832. As Valpy and Barker were great friends, the "Classical Journal" afforded the latter an excellent opportunity for indulging in a practice of which he is said to have been fond—of first criticising his own essays, and then replying to such criticisms, and triumphantly refuting them. Valpy was rather an enterprising publisher of classical books. Among the most spirited of his undertakings was a reprint of Stephens's "Thesaurus," commenced in 1816. Although the editorship of this work was announced as vested in more than one person, it appears that in reality the laborious duties of editor were performed by Barker with scarcely any assistance. The work appeared likely to be a great

success, as subscribers had been obtained to the extraordinary number of 1100. But Valpy had made a disastrous blunder when he chose Barker as editor. When the first numbers appeared, it was found that they scarcely contained a word of the original work of Stephens. Barker had so overlaid the text with extracts and additions, most of them utterly worthless, that the "Thesaurus" was substantially a new work, and a very careless and inaccurate work. The first man to open the eyes of the subscribers as to the real character of the work they had pledged themselves to take was Blomfield, who reviewed it in the *Quarterly* in 1819.

A criticism of a Greek lexicon does not appear to afford much scope for wit and pleasantry, yet parts of Blomfield's article are as amusing as anything of the kind ever written, and will bear reading even yet by those who know and care nothing about either Barker or Stephens. He calculates that, since the 688th page of Valpy's "Thesaurus" corresponded with the 53rd of the original edition, the work when complete would occupy at least fifty good folio volumes, and very probably more, and that the time which the publication would occupy would not be less than seventy years, long before which distant day Messrs Valpy and Barker, together with all the subscribers—printer, editor, readers and critics—would have been gathered to the Stephenses and Scapulas of other times. He remarks that it really seemed as if the encouragement Valpy and Barker had met with had filled them with such a lively sense of gratitude, and such a desire to gratify their kind patrons, that they had determined to make the "Thesaurus" literally a κτημα ἐς ἀεί, a book to be purchased for ever, a cyclic library, a publication at once periodical and perennial, compiled not for the present generation only, but for posterity

also—an heirloom to be bequeathed in some such clause as the following: "*Item*, I give and bequeath to my dear son, A. B., all those thirty-three volumes in folio, entitled, 'A new and improved edition of Stephens's "Thesaurus,'" being so much of the said work as has been yet published; also, I hereby devise to him and to his heirs for ever, all my right and title in the remaining twenty or more volumes of the said work, upon the condition of his or their paying, from time to time, the sum of two pounds two shillings lawful money of Great Britain, for each number as it shall come out."

The sensation created by this review was naturally immense. Many of the subscribers hastened to withdraw their names; and Lord Stowell, who was one of them, told Blomfield that he had well earned from the body a piece of plate. Murray sent him £100 as the *honorarium* for his article, and rarely has such a sum been better earned. Of course the anger of Valpy and Barker was great. The latter assailed Blomfield in a scurrilous pamphlet entitled "Aristarchus Anti-Blomfieldianus," a performance of incredible silliness, poor in matter, and offensive in manner. Among many other absurd things, he said that Mr Blomfield might justly claim to himself the merit of having with the spirit of an Indian barbarian conceived the right of revenge to devolve on him as the literary representative of the deceased, and of having presented the red hatchet of war instead of bearing before him the sacred camulet of peace! A reply to Barker appeared in the *Quarterly*, written, in part at least, by Blomfield, in which Barker is dealt with very gently, yet with due severity, as an industrious and laborious person, who had amassed a considerable quantity of information, which, under the guidance of sound judgment or of sober advice, might be turned to purposes

useful to the world and creditable to himself; but which, from his incredible want of discretion, afforded him but little prospect of attaining either object. However great was the animosity of Valpy and Barker to Blomfield, they prudently took his advice about the introduction of extraneous matter into the "Thesaurus" to heart. It was completed in ten volumes, the last of which was published in 1828.

The disputes carried on between the "Museum Criticum" and the "Classical Journal" brought Blomfield into antagonism with a man in many respects resembling Barker—George Burges, a frequent contributor to the latter periodical. Of their quarrels, only the conclusion need be mentioned here. Many years after the "Museum Criticum" and the "Classical Journal" had expired, Blomfield, when Bishop of London, met his former literary opponent, and spoke so kindly to him, that Burges wrote and told him of his necessities. Blomfield immediately set on foot a subscription for him, and afterwards procured for him from Lord Melbourne a pension of £100 a year.

Such is a brief narrative of Blomfield's more notable literary combats, in all of which he gained a decided victory over his antagonists. Among the more serious literary labours he engaged in were an edition of Callimachus, and the work on which his fame as a scholar mainly rests —his editions of the plays of Æschylus, which are still referred to with respect. At the time of their publication they were lauded to the skies both by the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*, and were honoured by being reprinted in Germany. As a classical scholar Blomfield resembled Porson in many ways, his notes being of a kind that appears dry and tedious to all save professional critics, relating mainly to metrical difficulties and emendations of the text.

When Blomfield fixed himself as a Fellow of Trinity College, he seems to have looked forward to a life of severe scholarship, but the fates had decreed it otherwise. In 1810 he fell in love, and married, so that he was obliged to vacate his fellowship. He was presented by his father's friend, Lord Bristol, to the rectory of Quarrington, in Lincolnshire, a poor benefice yielding only about £200 a year. This slender income, however, he was able greatly to increase by taking private pupils, among whom were numbered some of the *élite* of the young aristocracy, including the son of Earl Spencer, the famous book collector, who testified his sense of Blomfield's merits by presenting him to the rectory of Dunstan, in Buckinghamshire, where Blomfield went to reside in 1811, still retaining, however, his benefice of Quarrington. Blomfield's life at this time was a busy and a happy one. He was highly successful as a tutor, he attended sedulously to his pastoral duties, and he managed to find time for those classical pursuits to which his own tastes naturally inclined. He originated and carried out a scheme for sending a collection of all that the foremost Græcists in England had recently accomplished to the celebrated German scholar, Hermann, the old antagonist of Porson. A Latin correspondence ensued, in which many friendly congratulations were exchanged. In 1810 he published his edition of the "Prometheus Vinctus," the most celebrated of his labours on the text of Æschylus. Of it a highly favourable notice appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, in course of which it was said that Mr Blomfield, though quite a young man, was likely to rise to great eminence as a classical scholar, and to excite considerable jealousy in the souls of his unsuccessful competitors for reputation.

In 1817 his old patron, Lord Bristol, presented Blom-

field to the benefice of Chesterford in Essex, where he fixed his residence. Chesterford lies upon the great road between London and Newmarket, and was the place where, in 1817, all the carriages and coaches of those going to the races, which began on Easter Monday, stopped to change horses, and the inn at which that operation went on stood exactly opposite the parish church. It may easily be supposed that the crowds of people of all ranks and of all kinds of character that passed through the village on such occasions were often productive of scenes the reverse of orderly. Blomfield firmly set his face against the indecency. Among those with whom he remonstrated was the Duke of York, a regular frequenter of Newmarket, who replied, "I can't help it, I must be at my post; but I never travel on Sunday without carrying a Bible and Prayer-Book in the carriage." How this union of piety and devotion to horse-racing struck Blomfield we are not informed. His efforts to do away with the nuisance were not altogether fruitless. At length, after he had left the place, the Jockey Club was prevailed on to put off the meeting till Easter Tuesday.

In 1816 a great calamity befel Blomfield—the death of his beloved brother, Edward Valentine, a promising young scholar, of whom we are told that his intellectual attainments, though eminent, were yet surpassed by the excellent qualities of his heart, and that in him the accomplishments of the scholar and the artist were heightened and improved by all the gentler feelings of humanity. A yet heavier blow to Blomfield was the death of his wife in 1818, although the exceedingly delicate state of her health for some years must have in some degree prepared him for the event. She brought him six children, of whom only one attained maturity.

As was said before, Blomfield's life was one of constant success—ever a passing on from high to higher. In 1820 Howley, then Bishop of London, presented him to the living of Bishopsgate, worth rather more than £2000, and soon after appointed him Archdeacon of Colchester. As he still retained his other livings, worth over £400, Blomfield must now have been in very comfortable circumstances. As rector of Bishopsgate he showed all his accustomed energy and activity, visiting all his parishioners, poor and rich, at their own homes. His charitable nature was often imposed upon. During the severe winter of 1822-23, the people were relieved partly according to the number of their families. Blomfield thought he detected the same children in different rooms, and at last discovered that, as he went up and down stairs, the people let down children by the windows from one storey to another. How busy Blomfield was about this time appears from a letter he wrote to Dr Monk in 1823. "I have had on my hands a course of Lent lectures, an Anti-Catholic petition, the management of the tithes' question against the citizens of London; a weekly committee at Bartlett's Buildings, in consequence of Dr Gaskin's resignation; two articles in the 'British Critic,' &c., &c., all of which I have got through in the last four or five weeks, and am now ready for the 'Museum Criticum,' notwithstanding that I have still to write a Spittal sermon, a sermon for the Magdalen, three more charity sermons, and my visitation charge, all within the next month."

In 1834 Blomfield was elevated to the See of Chester. As it was then a very poor bishopric, he still kept the rectory of Bishopsgate. So at length the dream of his youth was realised. Henceforth we frequently find Blomfield taking a leading part in the debates in the House of

Lords, where he distinguished himself as a fluent and ready speaker. Yet he never could bring himself to preach anything but elaborately-written sermons. Once only he attempted to do so, and the result was not such as to encourage him to make a second trial. Finding himself one Sunday in his church at Chesterford without a sermon, he put the best face he could on the matter, and preached extempore from the text, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Curious to ascertain how he had acquitted himself, he asked an intelligent rustic after the service how he was pleased with the discourse. "Well, Mr Blomfield," was the reply, "I liked the sermon well enough; but I can't agree with you. I think there be a God." This story reminds one of that of the man who said he had listened to several courses of lectures on the Evidences, "but, thank heaven, I am still a Christian."

Blomfield was a very active bishop, although his zeal was not always tempered by discretion. He set his face strongly against the holders of pluralities and non-resident incumbents, apparently heedless of the fact that he himself had long been a pluralist and a non-resident incumbent. His portrait, painted soon after he became Bishop of Chester, represented him with a decided frown. Upon a friend mentioning this to him one day, he replied, "Yes, that portrait ought to have been dedicated, without permission, to the non-resident clergy of the diocese of Chester." No doubt Blomfield's reproofs to his delinquent clergy would have had more weight if his precept and practice had been consistent; however, there is a great deal of truth in what Johnson said to Lady Macleod, "People are more influenced by what a man says if his practice be suitable to it, because they are blockheads. The more intellectual a people are the

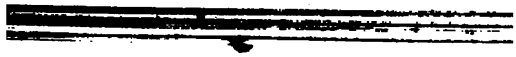
more they will attend to what a man tells them; if it is just they will follow it, be his practice what it will." A certain brusque manner and sharpness of speech which Blomfield possessed sometimes offended those who were not well acquainted with him, and, perhaps, his wit, as shown in such cases as when on one occasion he overcame a Quaker's scruples about uncovering in the vestry, by moving a resolution "that the beadle be directed to take off Mr ———'s hat," was not always appreciated as it might have been. A thoroughly honest man Blomfield unquestionably was, yet even his honesty was occasionally doubted. He was a rigid Sabbatarian, and his extreme views on this point caused him to be often attacked in the newspapers, where it was said that though he grudged the poor their pleasures, he was silent upon Cabinet dinners and the Sunday entertainments of the rich. In this they did him great wrong, for he carried his Sabbatarian principles consistently out, and even refused to dine with William IV. on a Sunday.

On the elevation of Bishop Howley to the Archbishopric of Canterbury in 1828, Blomfield was appointed Bishop of London. Henceforth his life is wholly that of an English ecclesiastic, and possesses little general interest. He took a prominent part in the "Tracts for the Times" controversy, and got involved in a good many of the disputes connected with it, which caused him great annoyance, and seriously affected his health. If his conduct was not always characterised by wisdom and moderation, it must be remembered that of few indeed who bore the brunt of the battle at this troubled epoch can this be said.

One Sunday in October 1855, just after he had preached, Blomfield was seized by an attack of paralysis. He rallied a little, but was obliged to resign his bishopric,

as, although his mental faculties were unimpaired, he was physically helpless. He lingered on for nearly two years, till, on the 5th of August 1857, he expired. "No sooner," writes his son, "was the death struggle over than his features seemed to regain the early beauty of which age and sickness had bereft them. His fine forehead, so often lately contracted with pain, lay smooth and unwrinkled as an infant's. All appearance of paralysis had passed away, and the lifeless face in its placid composure seemed in a moment to have lost twenty years of its age."

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